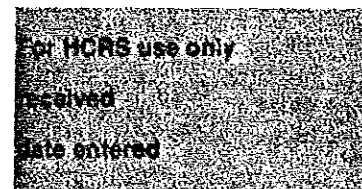


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections



**1. Name**

historic Downtown Greensboro Historic District

and/or common Downtown Greensboro

**2. Location**

street & number Along Elm Street from the 100 block of North Elm to the 600 block of South Elm street; also including the 300 block— not for publication of South Davie Street and portions of East and West Washington Streets  
city, town and portions of S. Green St. vicinity of congressional district

state Greensboro North Carolina code 37 county Guilford code 081

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple Ownership (See enclosed list.)

street & number

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Guilford County Courthouse

city, town Greensboro, N. C. state N. C.

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local \_\_\_\_\_

depository for survey records N/A

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved      date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Downtown Greensboro Historic District encompasses most of what is considered Greensboro's downtown business district. It is the actual and traditional central core of the city. The district is almost entirely commercial in nature, although it does have some office use and the heritage of Southern Railway plays an important part in the district.

Several major thoroughfares separate the district in a general way from the surrounding part of the city that differs from the district in either historical and architectural significance, age of construction, or usage. Friendly Avenue serves as general boundary on the north of the district, while Lee Street serves the same general function on the south. On the west the district is generally bounded by South Greene Street, although two significant structures on the west side of that street are included in the district. The Southern Railway complex and Arlington Street serve as general eastern boundaries for the district.

The central focus of the district is Elm Street which runs north-south through the center of the district. Generally both east and west sides of Elm Street are included in the district's boundaries. Other streets such as Washington and South Davie are included as they also contain significant structures.

The turn-of-the-century architecture of downtown Greensboro is that of a small town; Elm Street is like Main Streets everywhere. Throughout the commercial area most buildings are designed in a simplified version of the Italianate style.

The Italianate, distantly related to the palazzos of Renaissance Italy, became the most common style for American commercial buildings in the post Civil War period. At its most elaborate, the Italianate employed cast and galvanized iron to create ornate cornices and window lintels. These would create the dramatically articulated facades prized as a characteristic of the style.

This elaboration was rarely achieved in nineteenth century Greensboro. Here the architectural elements were reduced to minimal levels. Ornament was reduced in size and elaboration, the complexity and richness often characteristic of the Italianate is not present in Greensboro. The style, as practiced in the city, is a commercial vernacular. Often the stylistic references are almost unconscious.

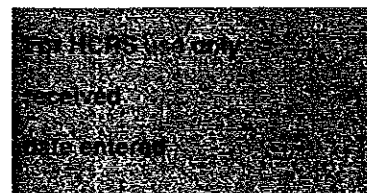
The oldest group of buildings to survive in the commercial area date from the 1880's. Entirely of brick, they are usually three stories high. Cornices and window trim are of corbelled brick. These project only eight to twelve inches from the facade. The brick is common brick layed in common bond.

Greensboro began to grow dramatically in the 1890's and with this growth came greater architectural richness. Galvanized iron cornices were introduced. These remained simple, the elaborate bracketed cornice typical of the period elsewhere is rare in Greensboro. Simple cast iron columns were introduced; granite sills and lintels were used. A hard-baked red face brick became regularly used on major facades. The resulting architecture was considerably richer in effect, the blank brick walls of the 80's were replaced with more articulated facades.

A typical front of this period used granite string courses at sill and lintel height.

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These were interspersed with string courses of bricks set diagonally to the front giving a sawtooth effect. Galvanized cornices separated the storefront from the upper level and crowned the building. The storefront itself was a simple wood construction with a central door and flanking windows.

On the most elaborate of the buildings of this type the central bay was articulated and expressed by breaking the main cornice. A small pediment or finial would be inserted here.

At the end of the century the first buildings with real architectural pretensions were built. Molded terra cotta was introduced, greatly increasing the elaboration of ornamental features. The basic Italianate formulas remained constant, but with the addition of classical or Romanesque details.

Several buildings use classical pilasters crowned by Romanesque arches. Ornamental terra cotta panels are located between the pilasters. With these buildings one can detect the hand of an architect or designer with more sophisticated architectural perceptions.

In the twentieth century there are two contrasting trends. Architect designed buildings became increasingly sophisticated, while the ordinary speculative commercial structures became simpler. Between 1910 and 1925 many of the commercial buildings lose ornament and retain almost no stylistic references. Cornices disappear or are reduced to a three or four inch projection, a mere vestigial remnant of the Italianate cornice. These buildings form a prelude to the striped down modernism of the 1930's.

In the 1920's the Art Deco, the modern style of the 20's, was popular in Greensboro, with the Kress Building a vividly colorful and sophisticated example. At the same time, elaborate classicism continued, with the tall Jefferson Standard Building, the Carolina Theatre, and the railroad station key monuments.

Terra cotta ornament and tile roofs were major elements in both styles. The terra cotta was often polychrome, thus adding richness in color to the streets and building facades. The Kress buildings, Woolworth's and the Carolina represent a peak in elaboration, not to be repeated in downtown Greensboro.

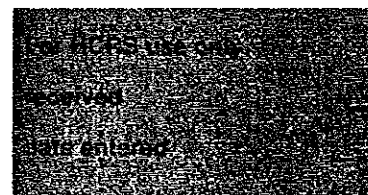
By the 1930's all traditional decoration disappears in the emerging sleek modernism which would mark the middle of the century. The former Belk Building is a very fine example of the new style.

In the 30's and 40's there was a regular pattern of exceptionally thorough remodelings of older buildings. It was common to remove one or two floors of an older building, and completely reface the building. In these cases it is almost impossible to identify any period characteristics in a building.

While the area contains a number of major architectural landmarks, the Jefferson Standard, the train station, the Carolina, the Kress and Woolworth's buildings, its significance does not lie in these buildings alone. Elm Street today is a rare survival. Located in

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a city and a state which almost entirely suburbanized, the simple architecture of Elm Street appears rich in comparison to the strip shopping center. While some elements have been lost the texture and the character of the street remains.

100 Block of North Elm Street

This part of the district is dominated by multi-story office buildings, but there are some smaller two-story commercial structures. The entire area was developed during the 1920's. There is a complete streetscape on the east side of the block while the west is dominated by the Jefferson Building.

100 Block of South Elm Street

This area is much smaller in scale than the previous block. It is characterized by two-story commercial structures, although it does contain a six-story older office structure. This area is also characterized by several different architectural styles and contains buildings built during the early 1900's and during the late 1920's and 1930's. The east side of the block presents a complete streetscape, but much of the western side is taken up by a parking lot, where previous structures were razed.

200 Block of South Elm Street

This area contains the most architectural diversity of any part of the district. Here are found the simple Italianate structures of the late 1880's, 1890's and early 1900's, as well as the Art Deco buildings of the 1920's and 1930's and the modern structures of the 1950's and 1970's. The entire area is included because all structures fit together so well to form a complete streetscape of both sides of the street and show such a wide range of architectural styles. Most of the structures are two-stories in height, although a few do rise to three and four stories.

300 Block of South Elm Street

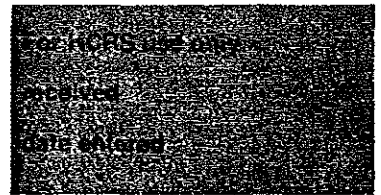
The west side of this block presents an almost continuous streetscape composed almost entirely of three-story structures built during the period of the late 1880's and early 1900's. The east side of this block presents a less complete streetscape with a wider range of architectural styles. Again, most of the buildings on this side of Elm Street, save one major multi-story office structure, are three-story commercial buildings. This area contains some structures from the 1920's and 1930's but mainly has structures from the late 1880's through the early 1900's.

400 Block of South Elm Street

Here the district streetscape is punctuated by the crossing of South Elm by the tracks of Southern Railway. The east side of the street is completely taken up by the Southern Railway Underpass and the landscaped area of Hamburger Square. The western side of the

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the block contains only two buildings, one being the Southern Railway Depot #1.

500 Block of South Elm Street

Both sides of this block present almost continuous streetscape, broken by vacant lots only in a few places. Almost all of the structures in this area were built during the late 1890's and early 1900's and are of two stories in height. The western side of the block does show more architectural diversity by presenting a few buildings from the 1920's, as well as the earlier periods.

600 Block of South Elm Street

The district extends into only part of the 600 block. Almost all of the west of the block is included as it presents a unified streetscape of similar buildings, most of which are three stories tall and present the same simple 1920's commercial style. The east side of the block has only one structure included in the district as the remainder of the block is covered with structures of a much more modern period.

300 Block of South Davie Street

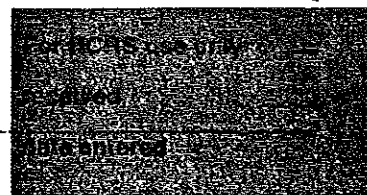
The west side of this block presents a continual streetscape broken in only a few places by vacant lots. Almost all of these buildings are all two to three stories and are designed in simple Italianate style. There are only three buildings that still stand on the east side of the street, the remainder of the area having been developed into parking lots. The scale of these buildings is of three and four stories and they are all abutting each other creating a nice small stretch of buildings.

100-200 Block of East Washington Street

Only two of the three structures that face the south side of the street are included in the district and this area does not present any sense of streetscape. One of these structures is a long two-story row building of 1912 and the other is the monumental Southern Railway Depot #2. A modern two-story brick industrial building that does face the street is excluded from the district.

100 Block of West Washington Street

Only the west side of the street is included in the district, as the north side is dominated by a modern parking deck. This side of the street does present a complete streetscape, but it does not present a uniformity of scale or architectural style. Of the four buildings that face the street, two are well preserved three-story Italianate structures from 1902 and the other two are modern one-story commercial structures of the late 1930's.

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300 Block of South Greene Street

Only two structures in this area are included in the district and it is only because of their significance that the boundaries extend this far west. Although these two structures are both large, impressive buildings they are of very different architectural style, the Carolina Theatre being Neo-Classical in design, while the Southern Life Building is Tudor in style. The area presents no sense of streetscape and these two isolated structures are surrounded by parking lots and one-story 1940's and 1950's commercial structures.

INVENTORY LISTNORTH ELM STREET 100 BLOCK

- C 100-102 North Elm- Former American Exchange National- 1920  
Bank Building

A multi-storied Neo-Classical skyscraper constructed of limestone with a handsome classical limestone cornice and a band of Greek ornaments separating the upper and lower floors. Built originally for the American Exchange National Bank it has been one of the city's more important office buildings since that time.

- C 104 North Elm Street- Former Southern Real Estate- ca. 1920  
Building

This Neo-Classical building, constructed as the offices of the Southern Real Estate co., has a well preserved upper level featuring a good entablature with an ornamented cartouche-like window in the middle of the cornice.

- C 106-108 North Elm Street- Younts-Deboe Building- ca. 1928

This Italian Renaissance structure has elaborately carved limestone and terra cotta decoration and features an elaborately designed terrazzo floor in it's entranceway. Since 1930 it has been occupied by Younts-Deboe, a well-known local men's clothing store.

- C 110-112 North Elm Street- Brownhills Building- ca. 1922

This Spanish style building has been occupied by Brownhills, a local ladies clothing shop, since 1927. Its upper levels were originally constructed in rough stucco with colored tile inserts. The lower storefront has been redone in a classical derived style of the 1950's with a broken pediment door and vestigial fluted columns.

- C 114 North Elm Street- The Piedmont Building- 1927

This six-story Italian Renaissance building is constructed with very fine polychromatic terra cotta details, similar in many ways to the Carolina Theatre. The lower level is dominated by a large arch enclosing a small arcade entranceway. Since the time of its construction, it has been one of Greensboro more important office buildings.

P 101-117 North Elm Street- Jefferson Standard Building- 1922-23

This U-shaped skyscraper is directly derived from the modern skyscraper style of Louis Sullivan. It is profusely decorated with stone and terra cotta ornament. It was designed by Charles Hartman, who was brought from New York to design the building by Julian Price, Jefferson Standard's President. Since its completion the Jefferson Standard Building has been Greensboro's major urban landmark.

SOUTH ELM STREET  
100 Block

N 118 South Elm Street- Lerner Building- ca. 1928

This modern commercial building has a two door concrete tile facade and was originally the home of Lerner's Women's Shop.

N 120 South Elm Street- Former Prago-Guyes Building- ca. 1930

This modern commercial building is covered in concrete tile facade from the 1950's and was an early location of Prago-Guyes, a well-known local ladies clothing store.

P 132 South Elm Street- Woolworth's Building- ca. 1929

Constructed in 1929 as the local store building for the nationwide F.W. Woolworth Co., this building uses elaborate ornamentation derived from classical Greece, restated in the Art Deco idiom. Large granite urns are inserted into the cornice and bronze decorations are used in several locations.

P 101-109 South Elm Street- Belk's Building- 1939

The Belk's Building is an excellent example of Moderne architecture that was popular in the 1930's and 1940's. The building is built of pre-cast concrete with strip glass block windows and a rounded ledge upon which the store name is emblazoned. Belk's was one of Greensboro's most popular department stores during the period 1940-1970.



c 113 South Elm Street- no name- 1939

This small Neo-Classical shop has very interesting deeply splayed segmented arches over its upper level windows. This building, originally the home of Lewis Ann Women's Wear Shop, may have additional upper floors which were removed. <sup>now</sup>

c 115 South Elm Street- Powell Building- ca. 1928

This small Neo-Classical shop is constructed in yellow brick with limestone trim with a classical upper level rather typical of the 1920's and 1930's. It's bottom floor was originally occupied by Powell's Walkover Shoe Shop and the upper floor housed a dentist's office and a beauty shop.

c 117-119 South Elm Street- Center Theatre- 1948

This Moderne theatre has a two-tone pink and white pre-cast concrete facade. Parallel to the pink pylon is a series of vertical elements which suggest classical flutes. During the period 1950-1970 the Center Theatre was one of Greensboro's most popular movie houses.

c 121 South Elm Street- Former Porter's Drug Store- ca. 1860's  
(Hobbs-Mendenhall Building)- 1926-1930  
<sup>ca.</sup>

This small Italian Renaissance building with elaborate terra cotta and wrought iron decorations, has long been reported to be Porter's Drug Store, where O. Henry worked as a boy. It was for many years the home of the O. Henry Drug Store #1, one of five stores in a local chain that played upon the O. Henry name. As much of its architectural detailing is similar to the Piedmont Building, the ~~two~~ <sup>PRESNT</sup> ~~structures~~ may have been designed by the same architect.  
<sup>FACADE</sup>

c 123 South Elm Street- Clegg Building- 1904

This small Italianate brick building was designed by F.A. Weston, an established architect who had just arrived in Greensboro from Denver, Colo., where he had worked for many years. The entire upper facade has a distinctive bay window shape, much used by Weston, and has interesting sculpted terra cotta faces worked

into its lower section. The building was constructed along with the adjoining Dixie Building and soon afterwards housed the Clegg Cafe. Later occupants were the Greensboro Music Co. and the municipal band.

P 125 South Elm Street- Dixie Building- 1904

Designed by F.A. Weston, in Richardson Romanesque style, the Dixie building was one of Greensboro's most impressive structures. The upper floors are covered in terra cotta decorations and colored terra cotta tiles are used to articulate the upper floors. This top floor was probably added during the 1920's and the original lower granite facade on the bottom two floors may still remain behind the present 1950's covering.

~~132 South Elm Street- Woolworth's Building- 1929~~

200 Block

C 200-206 South Elm Street- Meyers' Building- 1924

This four-story Neo-Classical structure has been modernized on its lower level to some extent, but still retains its original terra cotta ornamentation and its original cornice. Built as Meyer's Department Store, this was one of the first fire-proof structures in Greensboro and remained one of the city's most popular stores until the early 1970's.

P 208-210 South Elm Street- S.H. Kress Building- 1929

The Kress Building is an excellent example of the Art Deco Style of the 1920's. It remains one of the finest buildings in the downtown area and is elaborately ornamented with green, orange and yellow terra cotta decorations. The building remains virtually intact except for slight modernization of the storefront. It is very similar to Kress buildings in other cities especially Durham, North Carolina. Kress occupied the structure into the 1970's.

12-31-84

N 214-216 South Elm Street- Mangel-Saslow Building- 1934

The two small stores exhibit typical storefront designs from the late 1930's and are good examples of the commercial design of that period. They originally housed the stores whose names they now bear, which vacated the buildings in the 1970's.

N 218-220 South Elm Street- Revco Drugs- 1970

This is a modern brick commercial building of the 1970's, constructed on the site after the burning and razing of the previous structure. It is without architectural distinction.

C 226-228 South Elm Street- Former Ellis-Stone Building- ca. 1906

The Ellis-Stone Building represents a good example of changing architectural styles in the downtown area. Originally constructed as the Ellis-Stone Department Store in 1906 with a modernistic Italianate facade. Sometime during the 1920's and 1930's however, a new simplified Art Deco facade of yellow brick was installed. This new facade exhibits interesting geometrically derived ornamentation. The storefront is contemporary with the present facade. The building was occupied by Ellis-Stone until construction of its new building at 201-207 South Elm in 1949.

N 230 South Elm Street- Former Efrid's Department Store- ca. 1930

This structure, built as Efrid's Department Store, has a very simple ceramic tile facade with no ornamentation. It is very typical of 1930's commercial design.

C 232-234 South Elm Street- Former Montgomery Ward- 1936  
Building

A three-story Modernized Georgian structure built as the Montgomery Ward Department Store which sports a unique pediment containing a stylized W. characteristic of a style that was popular for department stores in North Carolina and Virginia during the 1930's.

C 236-238 South Elm Street- Vanstory Building- ca. 1885

This three-story Italianate structure contains its original cornice and a unique cresting containing the name Vernon, whose association with the building is unclear. Although its lower storefront has been modernized the rest of the building exists in a remarkably good state of preservation and is one of the finest pre-1890's structures still surviving in the downtown area. Soon after its construction it was occupied by Vanstory's Clothing Co., the best men's shop in the city. Vanstory's operated from this building until the mid 1920's.

N 201-207 South Elm Street- Thalhimer's Building- 1949

A quite modern department store building designed by the well-known New York firm of Vorhees, Walker Foley, and Smith. The building is built of brick with marble facing on the lower level, while the upper level is articulated by large recessed windows. Originally built as Ellis-Stone's, it later became Thalhimer's Department Store.

N 213 South Elm Street- Former California Fruit Store- ca. 1920

This small shop has very little architectural articulation and is characterised by a beige glass front with green glass ornament. It is quite typical of the 1930's and 1940's. It was constructed from the remains of the previous building and still retains some portions of a older rear wall which dates from the 1890's.

N 215 South Elm Street- National Hat Shop Building- ca. 1920

Although the present facade dates from the late 1940's, this small shop was probably constructed about the same time as 213 South Elm and also contains small portions of an older structure. The current facade is constructed of natural stone, rustic wood, vertical siding and aluminum show windows. The interior ceiling is covered with free form amoeba shapes and modernistic light fixtures.

N 217 South Elm Street- no name- ca. 1920

This is another small storefront whose architectural history seems to run similar to its neighbors. The present facade is constructed of white and green glass with a modern tilted display window and metal door. It does, however, contain portions of the rear wall of an older structure.

N 219 South Elm Street- Building- ca. 1885  
ca. 1949

This is another building with a unique architectural history. Evidence indicates that this building incorporates portions of the Caldcleugh Building (ca. 1885) which was partially razed in 1949. The Caldcleugh Building was, at one time, considered the longest commercial building in the state. The present facade dates from the 1950's or 1960's.

C 221 South Elm Street- Former Greensboro Hardware Co. - ca. 1908  
Building

Constructed as the home of the Greensboro Hardware Co. this structure may have been designed by F.A. Weston. The present facade dates from the 1960's and is of modern aluminum and glass. The entranceway has an interesting modern terrazzo design. This modern front may hide remains of the original facade.

C 233 South Elm Street- Hendrix Building- ca. 1908

This building is currently undergoing renovation. The modern facade has been removed revealing the original facade was of red brick with granite trim which has been greatly mutilated. The building may also have been designed by F.A. Weston and for over fifty years was the site of the Hendrix Shoe Store. The buildings interior has a very interesting cathedral ceiling.

C 225 South Elm Street- Shiffman Building- 1936

Constructed as the home of Shiffman's Jewelry Store, this Neo-Georgian building exhibits a facade with architectural elements derived from the work of the Adams Brothers in England. The building's interior is very impressive with plaster ornament, wall niches, and an iron balcony of Adamesque design. The Shiffman family has operated a jewelry business in several different locations in the downtown area since the turn-of-the-century and still operates from their present location.

C/N 227 South Elm Street- Building - ca. 1896

The upper two floors of this three-story Italianate structure are well-preserved with the original brickwork and galvanized metal cornice and trim. The lower storefront has been modernized in the 1950's. The building housed a number of different commercial establishments, including the Greensboro China Store and the Bernax Jewelry Co.

C 229 South Elm Street- Former Crescent Hardware Building- ca. 1886

A three-story Italianate structure whose upper floors remain intact with the original window trim and galvanized metal cornice. The lower storefront is modern in style and may hide some of the original facade. The building housed the Crescent Hardware Co. and the Vanstory and Balsey Real Estate Firm.

C 231 South Elm Street- Real Estate and Trust Building- ca. 1920

The lower part of this two-story Italian Renaissance structure has been modernized, but its top floor remains unchanged, still retaining the original cornice, granite string-courses, and pent roof. It is a typical 1920's design. During the 1920's it housed the Younts-Deboe Co. and later was used as the offices of the Rucker Cotton Brokers, and the Union Carbide Co.

P 233 South Elm Street- Former Cone Export Building- 1888  
#1

This Italianate structure was occupied by the Cone Export and Commission Co. during the 1890's, which handled the marketing of all the products made in the local Cone's mills. Later the building housed the Greensboro Trading Stamp Co. and the Singer Sewing Machine Co. The building's lower storefront is covered with a limestone front of the 1950's, which may hide portions of the original arched stone entranceway. The upper level still retains original heavy brick cornice, and string courses of articulated brick with granite window arches.

300 BLOCK

C 300 South Elm Street- Silver's Building- ca. 1897

A simple three-story brick building of Italianate structure whose upper levels are characterized by granite window sills and lintels. A large ornamental cornice once topped the building, but as since been removed. The storefront is covered with ceramic tile and a canopy from the 1950's. The building originally housed a men's clothier, a furniture store, and for many years Silver's Five and Ten Cent Store.

P 302-304 South Elm Street- Bain Building- ca. 1900

One of the earliest occupants of this Neo-Classical structure was W.C. Bain, a noted local contractor who built many of the more impressive downtown buildings. It is a three-story brick building with elaborately sculpted terra cotta panels below large arched windows on the upper level. The street level has been altered very little and still exhibits its original cast iron columns and glass transom. It may have been designed by J.H. Hopkins, a local architect who used this style in other buildings.

C 306-308 South Elm Street- Isaacson Building- ca. 1900

This two-story Art Deco structure is a modernization

of a ca. 1900 building, which for many years housed Isaacson's Clothing. The present facade is finished in cast stone and has some geometrical ornamentation on the top levels. It is a very simple example of the Art Deco Style and probably was installed in the 1930's when the top floor of the building was removed.

P 310 South Elm Street- Grissom Building- 1899

This is one of the most impressive structures along South Elm Street. The three-story Romanesque structure, designed by J.H. Hopkins, exhibits two upper floors in their original condition with elaborate molded brickwork, stone sills, and decorated window arches. The original triangular pediment that topped the building has been removed. The storefront has been modernized. For many years the building housed the Grissom's Drug Store.

P 312 South Elm Street- Burtner Building- ca. 1900

This three-story classical brick structure may also have been designed by J.H. Hopkins. Its style seems to be a transition from Romanesque to Classical with fine molded brick decoration and a galvanized iron cornice at the top level. The storefront has recently been remodeled and although not original is somewhat typical of the period of the building. Since 1910 the building has been occupied by Burtner Furniture Co.

P 314-316 South Elm Street- Newell Building- ca. 1900

This four-story Italianate stone structure retains its original windows and galvanized cornice. The storefront of 316 is original, but 314 dates from the 1930's. The building housed the Newell Hardware Co. and S.H. Kress Co. before it built its present building at 212 South Elm Street.

C 318 South Elm Street- Formerly The Original Racket- ca. 1886  
Store

This three-story brick building is constructed in a simple Italianate style with a brick corbelled



cornice, brick window lintels and wooden sills. The storefront has been modernized. The building originally housed the Original Racket Store, one of Greensboro's first department stores.

C 320 South Elm Street- Fortune Building- ca. 1886

Another simple Italianate structure with a brick corbelled cornice and a modernized storefront. It has been occupied by a number of commercial establishments including Fortune's Dry Goods and Gilmer's Department Store.

C 324 South Elm Street- McClamrock Building- ca. 1886

Another simple three-story brick Italianate building with brick corbelled cornice and window lintels. The entire lower storefront and the original window openings have been modernized. By 1902 the building housed the operations of the McClamrock Mantel Co., supposedly one of the largest operations of its kind in the country. The company even shipped mantels to defeated Presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan for use in his Nebraska home.

C 334 South Elm Street- Southern Export Building- ca. 1894

This two-story Italianate structure retains its original storefront with glass transom and galvanized metal cornice. The upper floor contains four small arched windows. It originally housed the Southern Export Co.

C 342-344 South Elm Street- Keeling Building- ca. 1890 & 1920

This three-story brick building was constructed during the 1890's and originally housed the Keeling Grocery and later the Hennessee Cafe. In the 1920's the present Italianate front with Greek key ornamentation and minimal brick cornice was installed. During the 1920's the building housed Coble Hardware, which later became one of Greensboro's leading sporting goods stores.

C 346-348 South Elm Street- Former Jim's Lunch- ca. 1927  
Building

The only real architectural articulation on this three-story Spanish stucco building is an elaborate window frame on the South Elm Street facade. By 1934 Jim's Lunch had occupied the building and remained there until the 1970's.

P 301 South Elm Street- Guilford Building- 1927

This multi-storied classical building was designed by Charles Hartman, architect of the Jefferson Standard Building. The building is built of brick with a large entranceway ornamented with granite colored terra cotta. Upon its completion the building housed the Greensboro Bank and Trust Co. and other offices including Standard Oil of New Jersey.

N 317 South Elm Street- American Cafe Building- ca. 1920

This is a simple one story brick commercial building without architectural distinction. It does, however, exist in its original state. The building was originally occupied by the American Cafe and later by the Monticello Cafe. By the 1940's it was known as the Princess Cafe.

P 319-321 South Elm Street- Former Greensboro Loan and- 1902  
Trust Co. Building

This three-story Neo-Classical structure originally had a central entranceway flanked by large Ionic columns. This lower level has been destroyed by modernization, yet the upper floors remain in their original condition with interesting wreathed window capitals and unique pediment atop the building. It was constructed as the offices of the Greensboro Loan and Trust Co., at one time the largest bank in Guilford Co.

N 323 South Elm Street- Rustin Building- 1937

This modern two-story building , originally occupied by the Rustin Furniture Co., uses bright blue ceramic

tile and stucco to make up its facade. The storefront probably dates from the time of construction.

P 325 South Elm Street- Former Odell Hardware Co. Office- ca. 1901  
Building

The small Classical brick building was built as the offices of Odell Hardware, one of Greensboro's leading businesses. Although the lowest level has been extensively altered and its original pediment destroyed, the building's upper levels still retain its original elaborately designed molded brick work. It is similar in design to other buildings in the area and may have been designed by J.H. Hopkins.

P 329 South Elm Street- Former Odell Hardware Co.- ca. 1885  
Showroom Building

This structure, even though it exhibits an entirely modern facade, is probably the oldest existing structure in downtown Greensboro. Constructed in the mid-1880's as the office and showrooms of Odell Hardware Co., this was lengthened and another story was added as the company expanded. Some of the original facade may still remain behind the present covering.

C 341-343 South Elm Street- Tanenhaus Building- ca. 1920

These small two-story Italianate-Spanish buildings retain their original storefronts with elliptical arches accented with cast iron decorations forming a stylized T. Its original occupants were the Tanenhaus Brothers Clothing Store.

C 345-347 South Elm Street- J.W. Jones Building- ca. 1896

This three-story Italianate structure is characterized by brick piers separated by bands of granite sills and lintels. These are interspersed with bands of brick set on edge to form a triangular saw-tooth design. The building has been extensively restored and although the storefront is not original it blends well with the structure. It originally

housed the J.W. Jones Wholesale Grocery, but in more recent times housed the California Sandwich Shop and the Blue Bird Billiard Parlor.

C 352-354 South Elm Street- American Wiennie Building- ca. 1920

One story stucco commercial building with little architectural merit. They once housed the American Wienie Shop.

C 358 South Elm Street- Clegg Bakery Building- ca. 1888

This three-story Italianate brick building was originally part of the Clegg Hotel Complex that occupied this site. Since the 1930's the building has been occupied by Blumenthal's Clothing store. The building's lower level bears a striking series of enameled signs which date from the 1930's and give the building a special visual effect.

400 Block

P 400 South Elm Street- Southern Railway Passenger- 1899  
Depot #1

This was originally an impressive Romanesque structure with a steep roof, corner turret, and projecting canopy. These have since been removed and the windows altered in size. It was the city's new passenger depot by Southern Railway and is still used by the company for offices.

P Southern Railway Underpass- 1927

Although it was designed by Charles M. Robinson, an early advocate of city planning and urban landscaping, as early as 1917, the underpass and its surrounding landscaped area was not constructed until 1927. The park area north of the tracks has long been known as Hamburger Square, because of the restaurants that sat on each corner around it.

C 408-410 South Elm Street- Former Cascade Salon-ca. 1896

Another three-story Italianate building with granite sills and lintels and an original storefront at 408. It originally housed the Cascade Salon and later the Clegg Grocery company.

## 500 Block

C 500-502 South Elm Street- Silas M. Thompson Building- ca. 1895

The only architectural elaboration on this <sup>tri</sup>angular brick Italianate structure ~~are~~ segmented arches over the second floor windows. The major feature of the building is small wooden cornice separating the original lower floor and the upper story which was added a few years later. The storefront has been modernized. The building originally housed Thompson's Shoe store.

C 504-506 South Elm Street- Former Piedmont Cafe and- ca. 1898  
Model Barber Shop

A Three-story Italianate brick building with granite trim and a galvanized metal cornice. A variety of stores have occupied this building including the Piedmont Cafe and the Model Barber Shop which operated into the 1940's.

C 512 South Elm Street- Hiatt Building- ca. 1897

A very well preserved two-story brick Italianate structure with an original storefront. This lower level is characterized by an all-wood front divided into three bays and flanked by two cast iron posts. The building originally housed the Hiatt Grocery.

P 514 South Elm Street- Fordham's Drug Store- ca. 1903

One of the downtown areas best-known architectural landmarks. Built as Fordham's Drug Store, this Italianate structure is characterized by a galvanized metal cornice with a mortar and pestal finial. The elaborate window capitals and ornamented

ventilators were added after 1909 and the store-front probably dates from the 1920's. The interior contains the original marble soda fountain, shelving and backbar. It is still operated as Fordham's Drug Store.

C 516-518 South Elm Street- Hodgkin Building- ca. 1896

An Italianate facade characterized by two deeply recessed storefronts separated by a brick column. This appears to be an early twentieth century refacing of an older structure. Originally housed Hodgkin's Dry Goods and Shoe Shop.

P 520-522 South Elm Street- Salvation Army Building- ca. 1928

A Spanish building of yellow brick with a handsome elliptical stone arched entranceway. The building also retains a typical Spanish tile roof and a small iron balcony over the entranceway. Built as the local headquarters of the Salvation Army and still used as such.

C 524 South Elm Street- Former South Greensboro National- ca. 1918  
Bank

One of the most impressive buildings along South Elm Street. It is a typical Neo-Classical temple style building with a triangular roof fronted by large columns in Ionic order. It originally housed the South Greensboro National Bank and later other banks, before serving as the Greensboro Boys Club in the 1940's.

C 526 South Elm Street- Hampton Building- ca. 1906

A two-story Italianate structure of beige brick with arched windows and an original galvanized cornice and storefront. It was originally occupied by the Hampton Piano Co. and later by the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company.

C 528 South Elm Street- Former Guilford Hardware Building- ca. 1895

This two-story brick Italianate building has had its original cornice removed but still retains ornamental brickwork tying the window lintels

together and a large semicircular ventilator on the upper level. The store has been only slightly modernized. The building was occupied by the Guilford Hardware Co. for many years.

C 530 South Elm Street- Former O. Henry Drug Store #4- ca. 1910

A two-story Italianate structure that has been so modernized that it is difficult to determine its original appearance. At one time it housed one of five in a local chain of O. Henry Drug Stores.

C 532-536 South Elm Street- Shevell Building- ca. 1898

A three-story Italianate structure with bands of granite trim and well preserved metal cornices that separate the lower and upper levels and tops the building. The storefront appears to date from the early twentieth century. The entire lower facade may have been replaced after the 1936 Tornado. The building has housed a number of commercial establishments including the Shevell Furniture Co.

C 511 South Elm Street- Former Guilford Bargain House- ca. 1923  
Building

A two-story Italianate brick building with no real architectural ornamentation, that originally housed the Guilford Bargain House and the Piedmont Hardware Co.

C 513 South Elm Street- Hudson Building- ca. 1895

This two-story Italianate structure, originally occupied by Hudson Grocery, that retains an early, if not original storefront. The entire area along the five hundred block of South Elm took its name from Hudson's Grocery and became known as Hudson's Hill.

C 515 South Elm Street- Tucker-Erwin Building- ca. 1895, ca. 1930's

A Modern facade of the 1930's or 1940's that refaced an older building, that originally housed the Tucker-Erwin Grocery and a photography studio. The present facade has no real architectural merit.

C 517 South Elm Street- Dixon Building- ca. 1904

A one story simple Italianate structure with an original storefront transom cornice and decorative brickwork. It was originally occupied by Dixon's Barber Shop and later by the Art Barber Shop.

C 519 South Elm Street- Former Commercial Hotel- ca. 1903

This two-story Italianate structure originally had a large bay window that projected over the entranceway. This has now been removed and the window filled in. It may have been designed by F.A. Weston. The Commercial Hotel originally occupied the buildings upper floors which were destroyed in the 1936 Tornado.

C 523-525 South Elm Street- Southside Hardware Building- ca. 1902

A building identical in style to 519 South Elm and probably built at the same time. It also had a third story and bay windows projecting from the front, which were destroyed in the 1936 Tornado. Southside Hardware has occupied the building since its construction.

C 527 South Elm Street- R.P. Gorrell Building- ca. 1904

Another two-story Italianate structure with a modernized storefront. The upper floors retain the original ventilators and brick trim. For many years the building was occupied by R.P. Gorrell who operated feed and clothing stores from the bottom floor and lived on the top floor.

N 529 South Elm Street- B.W. Jerrell Building- ca. 1936

A one story brick building with its original 1930's storefront and transom panel that housed the Piedmont Pie Company.

N 531 South Elm Street- Harry D. Kellet Building- ca. 1944

A modern one story brick commercial building with a rounded entranceway covered with black glass panels with strips of glass squares along the entrance



similar to the Belk Building. The building originally housed the local Lincoln-Mercury dealership of Harry D. Kellet.

600 Block

- C 600-604 South Elm Street- South Elm Street Hotel - ca. 1903  
Building

A simple Italianate structure with segmented arched windows connected together by brick molding. 604 retains its original storefront. The building has housed a number of small hotels and rooming houses and lost its upper floor in the Tornado of 1936.

- C 603-605 South Elm Street- Weaver-Bain Building- ca. 1903

An Italianate building that remains in a good state of preservation. The building retains its original cornices, window trim and storefronts. The building originally housed the Weaver and Bain Grocery Stores and was later occupied by the Mint Cola Bottling Co.

- C 606-608 South Elm Street- Building- 1923

A three-story Italianate building with a small sort of corbelled cornice near the roof and interesting iron ventilators. The original storefront remains intact. The building housed a variety of commercial concerns.

- C 610-612 South Elm Street- Former Mutual Store Building- 1923

Another Italianate structure identical to its neighbor at 606-608 South Elm except this building is constructed of ornate brick. The original storefronts and glass transom panels remain but have been painted over.

- C 614-618 South Elm Street- Former Craven Hotel- ca. 1923

An Italianate structure of three stories that is similar in design to the adjoining buildings. It was built as the Craven Hotel and later operated as an automobile co.

## SOUTH DAVIE STREET

- C 322 South Davie Street- Former Odell Hardware Co.- ca. 1917  
Warehouse #3

An unusually fine example of Neo-Classical industrial architecture in the Odell Hardware complex. The building still retains its galvanized metal cornice and has very handsome arched windows on its third level. It was used as office and warehouse space for the expanding Odell co.

- C 324-326 South Davie Street- Former Odell Hardware- ca. 1900  
Warehouse #1

A four-story simple Italianate structure with granite window sills. The interior still contains its original heavy timbered construction. It too was constructed as warehouse space for the Odell co.

- C 328-330 South Davie Street- Former Odell Hardware- ca. 1910  
Warehouse #2

Another Italianate warehouse building in the Odell complex and one of the most interesting industrial buildings surviving in Greensboro. It is a simple brick box with windows, segmented heads, granite sills and string courses indicated by bricks in set on the diagonal to provide a saw-tooth shadow effect. Also built as warehouse space for the rapidly growing Odell Hardware Co.

- C 301-303 South Davie Street- Patterson Building- ca. 1903

A simplified Italianate brick warehouse building that is the remains of a larger building. Built as the warehouse for the Patterson Grocery whose store was on South Elm Street, the building has simple windows with fragmental arches above them and a small brick cornice between the buttresses at each end of the building.

- c 305-307 South Davie Street- American Commission Co.- ca. 1903  
Warehouse

A pair of warehouse fronts with surprising architectural elaboration. There is a galvanized cornice at the first and second floor levels and granite window sills and lintels. One of the original fronts remains. Once occupied by the American Commission Co., reportedly the largest wholesale grocery distributor between Washington and Atlanta.

- c 311 South Davie Street- Taylor Building- ca. 1910

A two-story brick Italianate building with arched windows and granite trim. The original storefront has been replaced. It originally housed the Taylor Waggon Co.

- c 315-317 South Davie Street- Scott-Spager Building-ca. 1911

Another two-story Italianate brick warehouse building with its original storefront and its original windows, sash, and arched window heads. It was constructed to house the Scott-Spager wholesale grocery firm.

- c 319 South Davie Street- Guilford Marbel and Tile Co.- ca.1913  
Building

A two-story Italianate brick building with arched window heads and granite sills. The original storefront with its glass transom remains intact. It was originally occupied by the Guilford Marble and Tile Co.

- c 321 South Davie Street- Davis Building- ca. 1920

This two-story Italianate structure retains its original storefront, but as was typical of 1920's construction has limited ornamental brickwork.

C 323-325 South Davie Street- Newell Building- ca. 1919

A simple Italianate building of the 1920's, with two sets of galvanized metal cornices and the original glass transom above the storefront. The building was originally occupied by the M.G. Newell Co., a firm which manufactured carriages.

C 327 South Davie Street- Petty-Reid Building- 1903

A brick Italianate structure in a very good state of preservation. The building retains its original storefront, galvanized cornice and glass transom. It originally housed the Petty-Reid Co., a dealer in farm implements.

C 329 South Davie Street- M.T. Pickard Building- ca. 1904

This three-story Italianate brick building has an unusually elaborate series of brick pilasters on the upper levels setting atop the original storefront. Its original occupant was the Pickard Wholesale Grocery Company.

C 333-335 South Davie Street- Ballance Building- ca. 1906

This two-story Italianate building retains its original storefront, windows and decorative trim. The storefront is framed with pilasters and brick moldings with minimal, almost gothic detailing. By 1910 the building housed the Ballance Candy Co.

C 337 South Davie Street- Former National Biscuit Co.- ca. 1903  
Building

A three-story Italianate structure with granite window sills and a galvanized cornice that seems to have been added between 1910 and 1917. It was originally occupied by the National Biscuit Co. The original storefront has been greatly altered.

C 339 South Davie Street- Williams-Hall Building- 1903

Another three-story Italianate structure almost identical in appearance to 337 South Davie Street, although it seems to retain its original

storefront. It was originally occupied by the Williams-Hall Wholesale Grocery Company and later housed the Transou Hat Co.

C 341 South Davie Street- Interstate Chemical Building- 1903

Although this three-story building now has a very modern appearance it was, however, the most architecturally interesting buildings on South Davie Street. It originally had large bay windows on both upper floors that projected out over the entranceway, giving it a distinctive Victorian appearance. By 1910 it housed the Interstate Chemical Co.

WASHINGTON STREET

C 118-136 East Washington Street- Building- ca. 1912

A long, consistently designed Italianate row of shops with office space above. It is constructed of brick covered with stucco and retains an iron cornice and molded keystones and pilasters on the upper level. The storefront of 124 is probably close to the original appearance of all these shops. The shops have housed such unrelated businesses as a book bindery, plumber, a theatre, and a candy store.

P 303 East Washington Street- Southern Railway Passenger- 1927  
Depot #2

A fine Neo-Classical building built of brick and stucco. It has a monumental portico in the Ionic order providing the main entrance. This opens onto a large arched vestibule which leads to along concourse hall. The interior is almost ecclesiastical in feeling. Built as Southern Railway's new passenger depot it has now been acquired by the City of Greensboro and will be put to some meaningful municipal use.

P 113 West Washington Street- J.W. Scott Building- 1902

A three-story Italianate structure with its original storefront intact. A large triangular pediment bearing the date of construction has been removed. It is very similar in design and was constructed at the same time as 111 West Washington Street and may have been designed by J.H. Hopkins.

P 111 West Washington Street - Cone Export Building #2 - 1902

A three-story brick Italianate structure with elaborately designed pilasters, molded brick trim and arched windows on the upper floor. The Store front dates from early in the building's history if it is not originally. The building originally housed the Cone Export Company.

P ASHEBORO STREET - Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Depot - ca. 1899

A large wood frame building the central portion of which served as the original Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Depot. The wings, although identical in construction were added by Southern Railway ca. 1913. It is a very good example of typical 19th century railroad construction with decorative wooden brackets and exposed wooden structure throughout the building.

SOUTH GREENE STREET

C 301 South Greene Street - Greensboro Coffee Shop - post 1930  
One-story brick commercial building with "moderne" diner exterior and diagonal corner entrance bay.

P 308-310 South Greene Street - Carolina Theatre 1927

An unusually fine example of Neo-Classical theatre architecture. The exterior is covered with elaborate classical ornamentation all rendered in polychromatic terra cotta. Built as the largest and finest movie house in the Carolinas during the late 1920's and 1930's.

C 313-317 South Greene Street - three contiguous brick buildings painted beige with brown trim.

313 - 1920-1929: Three-story building with corbeled brick cornice, segmental arched windows on side elevation and rectangular windows on front.

315 - post 1930: Two-story commercial building with corbeled cornice.

317 - Nautilus Club - post 1930: Two-story brick building with recent facade added.

P 316-318 South Greene Street - ca. 1939

Two-story brick building with glassine and glass brick work on the first level.

C 330 South Greene Street - Southern Life Insurance Company Building ca. 1927

a very good example of the Tudor style rendered in a rather simplified, yet elegant way. Completely unaltered and in a very good state of preservation, it was constructed as the offices of Southern Life Insurance Company, and is still occupied by the company.

LEWIS STREET

P 110-112 Lewis Street - Former Oak Hill Hosiery Mill - ca. 1890.

This two-story Italianate structure is the best

preserved buildings from the early period of urbanization in downtown Greensboro. It has an interesting parapeted upper facade with a semicircular ventilator and two original storefronts. The Oak Hill Hosiery Mill originally occupied its upper floor and it later housed other businesses.

BARNHARDT STREET

N 102-104 Barnhardt Street- Building- ca. 1930's

A one story concrete block warehouse probably built in the 1930's or 1940's and used mainly as warehouse space.

C 106-108 Barnhardt Street- Former Guilford Roller- ca. 1890  
Mills

A two-story brick Italianate industrial building with segmented arches over the doors and windows and an original or very early wooden porch. Built for the Oak Hill Roller Mills, which later changed to Guilford Roller Mills, it was later used as warehouse space.

## McGEE STREET

- F 109-115 McGee Street - one-story brick commercial structure, ca 1940.

Consists of four plain storefronts with plate glass windows flanking entrances. Loading platform recessed at west side of building.

- C 117-121 McGee Street - (former) General Greene Hotel, ca. 1915.

A three-story brick structure erected ca. 1915. Four intact, simple wooden storefronts at street level, including hotel entrance. Upper floors have six-bay divisions with course of rusticated stone trim running under the sills on each floor. Flemish bond brickwork on front facade, common elsewhere. Mock wooden balustrades flank hotel sign above third floor.

SMOTHERS PLACE  
(formerly Walker Avenue)

- F 122 Smothers Place - one-story concrete block commercial structure.



## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** ca. 1885-1930

**Builder/Architect**

Various, see inventory sheets

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

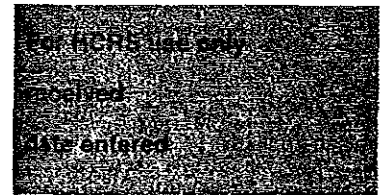
The Downtown Greensboro Historic District encompasses all that remains of Greensboro's central business district that developed during the period 1885-1930, probably the most significant period of growth in the city's history. It contains a number of excellent examples of the different styles of commercial architecture that were popular during this period of development. The area encompassed by the district served as the city's major office and commercial center during this significant period of growth and as such was associated with the lives of many of the city's more important and influential citizens.

### Criteria Assessment:

- A. The Downtown Greensboro Historic District is representative of the process of urbanization in many smaller cities all over the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is especially significant to the urbanization of Greensboro due to its development into the city's major office and commercial center; Woolworth building associated with 1960 sitings, a key event in the American Civil Rights Movement.
- B. The Downtown Greensboro Historic District is also associated with the lives of many of Greensboro's most important and influential citizens, many of whom played important roles in the social and economic life of the city.
- C. The Downtown Greensboro Historic District is also representative of late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial architecture and is all that remains of the central business district that developed during the time when the City of Greensboro really began to take on the shape and form it has today.

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Downtown Greensboro, much of which is today known as Old Greensborough, is a unique historical and architectural resource that spans a period of almost fifty years of urban development. Architecturally and historically, the downtown area is one of the few remaining links that the people of Greensboro have with the period during which their city really began to take on the shape and form it has today.

Although founded as early as 1808,<sup>1</sup> Greensboro did not experience a significant period of growth and urban development until the latter part of the nineteenth century. Being an inland city and not situated upon a major river or overland transportation route, Greensboro had to await the development of the state's railroad system to provide the stimulus for urbanization. This lack of urban development was characteristic not only of Greensboro, but also of the entire state of North Carolina. In fact, at the end of the Civil War there were only fourteen towns in the state that had populations of more than 1,000, and Greensboro was not among them.<sup>1</sup>

Greensboro's first rail connections were completed early in the second half of the nineteenth century and entered the city at the same point where the railroad tracks today cross South Elm Street. The North Carolina Railroad was completed to Greensboro in 1856 and the Piedmont Railroad in 1864.<sup>2</sup> These two rail connections linked Greensboro with a large area and provided a vehicle for urban growth; however, the advent of the Civil War and the period of Reconstruction which followed hindered this potential for development.

It was not, therefore, until the decade 1880-1890 that Greensboro began to make the transition from a small village to a large urban center. It was during this period that Greensboro experienced a subtle but nevertheless profound change in economic activity that led to the development of the downtown area during the period 1885-1930.

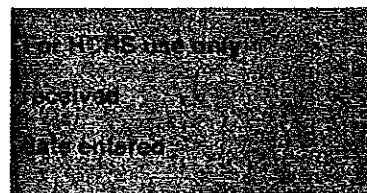
At the beginning of the decade 1880-1890 Greensboro had a population of only 2,105<sup>3</sup> and was little more than a small village. Prior to this period Market Street was the center of Greensboro's commercial activity<sup>4</sup> and the city's economy was primarily retail in nature.<sup>5</sup> Because of the city's economic isolation from the surrounding area, most of its commercial establishments were small and catered mainly to the immediate area.<sup>6</sup>

During the 1880's, however, Greensboro's new rail connections opened up new markets throughout the central part of the state and the city's commercial activity began to change. South Elm Street, because of its proximity to the rail lines, replaced Market Street as the city's major commercial area and by the end of the decade was referred to by local citizens as, "the great artery of trade"<sup>7</sup> and praised by outsiders as, "...one of the handsomest business boulevards in this country."<sup>8</sup>

The type of commercial activity conducted in downtown Greensboro also began to change during this period. The access to new markets provided by the rail system created a trend toward commercial specialization and spurred the transformation of much of the city's economic activity from retail to wholesale trade.<sup>9</sup> Greensboro's merchants no longer thought only of serving their immediate surrounding area, but began to cater to the needs of consumers throughout the central part of the state and much of the southeastern part of the country. During this period the number of unspecialized general stores in the city decreased from 38.5% of the total number of stores to only 10.1% of the city's commercial establishments.<sup>10</sup>

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This change in economic activity brought new prosperity to most Greensboro merchants and this increased prosperity was reflected in the built environment. Prior to this period of 1880's commercial expansion, most of the city's merchants operated at a low level profitability.<sup>11</sup> This situation dictated a building trend which insured that most downtown commercial buildings built prior to 1880, none of which now exist, were of small size and very simple style. As the prosperity of the merchants increased, however, they were able to put more money back into their businesses,<sup>12</sup> which resulted in the construction of larger and more elaborate commercial buildings.

The development of the Odell Hardware Company is one of the best examples of this trend. Its original building was constructed in the 300 block of South Elm Street in the early 1880's as a small two-story dry goods store.<sup>13</sup> By 1896, however, the company had become a profitable wholesaler of hardware items, had added a third story, and almost doubled the length of their building;<sup>14</sup> reportedly making it the largest commercial building in the state.<sup>15</sup>

Constraints upon the growth and expansion of the downtown commercial district also began to exert themselves during this period. The black residential area of "Warnersville", situated south of Lee Street and west of South Elm Street, began to expand during the 1870's and 1880's, and the large white residential area known as "South Greensboro" began to expand south of Lee Street and west of South Elm Street. The development of these two residential areas prevented the latter growth of the central business district south of Lee Street.<sup>16</sup>

Residential development also impeded the expansion of the central business district in all other directions as well. Prior to 1890, Elm Street north of Market Street was open for only two blocks and this area was occupied by a mix of government buildings and residences.<sup>17</sup> Greene Street on the west and North Davie Street on the east were also dominated by residential development.<sup>18</sup>

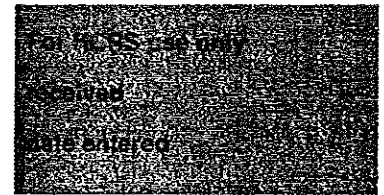
Thus, by 1885 the historic pattern of Greensboro's downtown business district was established. At that time the city limits extended one mile in each direction from the intersection of Elm and Market Streets<sup>19</sup> and a ring of residential development completely encircled the outer edges of the city leaving only the major streets of South Elm and South Davie to be developed as the traditional center of the city's commercial activity.

From this point, the development of Greensboro's central business district can be traced through several distinct ten-year phases covering a long period of social, economic, and architectural change. The first of these phases of development covers the period before 1890 when most of the buildings constructed were from one to three stories in height and simple design.

By 1890 the first two blocks of South Elm Street were heavily developed with brick commercial buildings.<sup>20</sup> A fine hotel, exclusive dry goods and clothing stores, and bank offices predominated in this area.<sup>21</sup> Of these original buildings, none now remains in the 100 block of South Elm Street and only a few still remain in the two hundred block. The most notable of these remaining buildings are the Vanstory Building (ca. early 1880's) on the west side of the two hundred block, the Crescent Hardware Building (ca. 1886) and the Cone Export Building (1888) on the east side of the block.

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The 300 block of South Elm Street was more sparsely developed before 1890. Although this area was dominated by the elaborately designed McAdoo Hotel, it was, at this time, the site of less imposing commercial buildings than those that existed in the first two blocks of South Elm Street. The most notable surviving structures from this period of development in the 300 block of South Elm Street are the Odell Hardware Building (ca. 1886) on the east side of the block and the entire row of buildings from 318 to 324 South Elm (ca. 1888) on the west side of the block.

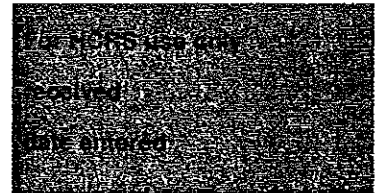
The area along South Elm Street at and south of the railroad tracks was even more sparsely developed prior to 1890. There was not a brick commercial structure on South Elm Street south of the tracks before this date,<sup>22</sup> and the wooden structures that were there were demolished to make way for the brick buildings during the next phase of urban development.

This next phase of development of Greensboro's downtown commercial district spanned the period 1890-1899. During this period Greensboro's economy began to respond to the changes that took place in the previous decade. The city was becoming a more important rail center, local merchants were responding to the new markets opened up by the rail system, large industries were locating in Greensboro, and real estate speculation was taking place at a feverish pace. At the beginning of the decade Greensboro was a "booming" village of 3,317 persons and by the decade's end it was a growing city of 10,135.<sup>23</sup> Greensboro was just one of several cities across the state that experienced a great increase in urbanization during this period. The number of cities in North Carolina with populations of over 10,000 people<sup>24</sup> rose from one in 1870 to six in 1890.

This phase of urban development was also one of changing architectural trends. In 1890 there were no local architects practicing their trade in the city,<sup>25</sup> but by 1899 two architects, best known of whom was J. H. Hopkins, had settled in Greensboro.<sup>26</sup> The buildings constructed during the early part of this decade tended to reflect the same simple commercial style of the previous decade, while those built towards the end of the decade reflect a much more elaborate architectural design. Excellent examples of this changing trend are the Oak Hill Hosiery Mill (ca. 1890) on West Lewis Street and the Grissom Building (1899), designed by J. H. Hopkins, in the three hundred block of South Elm Street.

Most of the building during this period was centered around the railroad crossing and took place in the three, four, and five hundred blocks of South Elm Street. The most notable surviving structures from this period of time are the Oak Hill Hosiery Mill (ca. 1890) on West Lewis Street, the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railroad Depot (ca. 1890) along Asheboro Street, Fordham's Drug Store (1898) in the 500 block of South Elm Street, the Southern Railway Passenger Depot No. 1 (1899), and the Grissom Building (1899).

The first decade of the twentieth century encompassed the next phase of development that helped shape Greensboro's downtown. During this ten-year period, 1900-1909, Greensboro's population increased from 10,035 to 15,895,<sup>27</sup> and the city's built environment began to reflect the excitement and energy of a growing urban area. Two more architects selected Greensboro as an area to practice their trade during this period.<sup>28</sup> The most important of these was F. A. Weston, who arrived in Greensboro from Denver in 1903. While in Denver, Weston designed many important buildings throughout the western and southern parts of

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the country.<sup>29</sup> Over the next fifteen years Weston designed many of the important and more elaborate buildings in the downtown area, only a few of which still remain.

Most of the building during this phase of development took place in the 300 blocks of South Davie and South Elm Streets. Because of its proximity to the railroad tracks, the South Davie Street Development Company purchased most of the land along South Davie Street in 1903 and over the next fifteen years developed the area as the city's major warehousing district.<sup>30</sup>

Several impressive structures still remain from this period of construction. The most notable of these are the Dixie Building (1904), designed by F. A. Weston, in the one hundred block of South Elm Street, the Greensboro Loan and Trust Building (1902) and the Merchants Grocery Building (ca. 1900) in the three hundred block of South Elm Street.

The growth of Greensboro's central business district was shaped by the interplay of several factors during the following ten-year period of development. Evidence indicates that the period 1910-1919 was a slower period of overall growth for the entire city. During this time Greensboro's population increased from 15,895 to 19,861.<sup>31</sup> Although these figures do reflect a steady rate of growth, they also represent a somewhat smaller increase in population than in the previous two decades.

There was also a growing shortage of building sites in the downtown area. The central business district was still prevented from expanding beyond its South Elm Street and South Davie Street focus by the surrounding ring of residential development and most of that central area, except the six hundred block of South Elm Street, had been developed during the preceeding twenty-five years. Thus, most of the area available for downtown commercial construction was already developed with relatively new buildings not yet obsolete enough to warrant demolition for new construction.

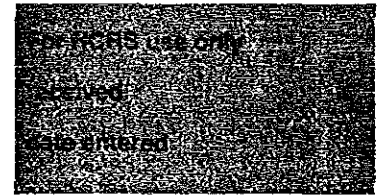
It is probable then that few buildings were constructed in the downtown area between 1910 and 1919. However, the few structures that do remain from this period indicate that Greensboro was beginning to develop a tradition of more elaborate architectural design. The development of this trend may have been spurred by the relocation of even more architects into the Greensboro area. It was during this period that Raleigh James Hughes, designer of the Surry and Davie County courthouses, and the nationally-known architectural firm of Milburn, Hester, and Company, architects for all Southern Railway Depots in the South, opened offices in Greensboro.<sup>32</sup>

The most significant remaining structures from this period are the Bank of South Greensboro Building (ca. 1917) in the 500 block of South Elm Street and the entire block of small shops from 118 to 136 East Washington Street.

This period of slowed urban development was followed by one of the most exciting and dramatic periods of growth in Greensboro's history. Between 1920 and 1929 the boundaries of the city were greatly expanded,<sup>33</sup> its total population increased from 19,861 to 53,569,<sup>34</sup> and the city government embarked upon an ambitious plan of urban development.<sup>35</sup> These events erased most of the previously existing constraints upon the growth of the central business district and for the first time allowed Greensboro's major commercial area to expand beyond the confines of South Elm Street. This great period of urbanization in Greensboro followed a period of tremendous urban growth all across North Carolina during which the

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percentage of the state's urban population increased from 10% in 1900 to almost 20% by 1920.<sup>36</sup>

The building trend of this period reflected the fact that Greensboro was one of the fastest growing and most progressive cities in the state and perhaps in the South. Many of the buildings constructed during this period of time were large, massive structures on which the use of elaborate architectural detailing was employed to transfer the energy and vitality of the city into its built environment.

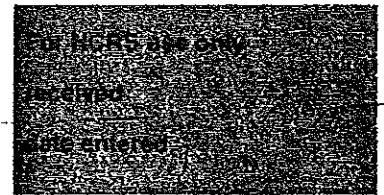
The development of much of this trend can be attributed to the influence of Charles Hartman, Greensboro's most important and influential architect of the mid-twentieth century. Hartman, employed by the Stoddard Company of New York City, was supervising architect for the construction of the O. Henry Hotel in 1919.<sup>37</sup> In this capacity, he impressed Julian Price, president of the Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company, and was offered the architectural commission for Jefferson Standard's new building.<sup>38</sup> Thus induced, Hartman came to Greensboro in 1920 to design the Jefferson Standard Building and remained to practice his trade into the 1960's.<sup>39</sup> During this period he designed many of the more impressive structures in downtown Greensboro, including the Jefferson Standard Building and the Guilford Building as well as the rebuilding of the F. W. Woolworth Building (1929).

Most of the building during this period took place in the one and two hundred blocks of South Elm Street, destroying much of the built environment from the period prior to 1880, but much of it also took place outside the traditional South Elm Street commercial area. Streets such as North Elm, Greene, and Washington became major parts of the central business district during this time.

The impressive structures which survive from this period of development include several of Greensboro's major urban landmarks. The most significant of these structures are the Jefferson Standard Building (1923) and the Piedmont Building (1925), in the 100 block of North Elm Street, the F. W. Woolworth's Building (1929) in the one hundred block of South Elm Street, the S. H. Kress Building (1929) in the two hundred block of South Elm Street, the Guilford Building (1927) in the three hundred block of South Elm Street. The construction and opening of the Carolina Theatre in 1927 demonstrated the popularity of theatre in the community as nationally and Greensboro's growing urban population's ability to support it.

Following this period of explosive growth Greensboro's downtown area remained a hub of activity for the city's social and economic life for many years. This is evidenced by the construction of two large impressive department store buildings, Belk's (1938) and Thalhimers (1950), on South Elm Street. As Greensboro prepared to enter the 1960s, racial unrest prompted an event that brought national focus upon the city and drastically altered the patterns of social behavior throughout the South.

At 4 PM on February 1, 1960, four black freshmen from Greensboro A&T College (now A&T State University) entered the F. W. Woolworth Store on North Elm Street and seated themselves in the "white only" section of the lunch counter. The Greensboro sit-ins had begun. The four young men, Ezell Blair, Jr., Franklin McCain, Joseph McNeil, and David Richmond had no idea that their protest of segregated and unequal eating facilities in the Woolworth

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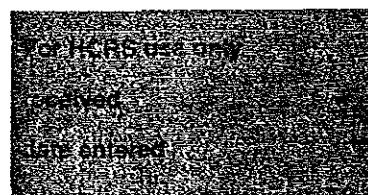
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Store in Greensboro would suddenly launch an unprecedented chain reaction culminating in integrated lunch counters and restaurants throughout much of the South. The response by blacks, mostly students, was massive and swift. Within two weeks similar sit-ins had occurred in Winston-Salem, Durham, Charlotte, Fayetteville, Raleigh, Elizabeth City, High Point, Hampton (Virginia), and Chattanooga (Tennessee). By mid-March, the protest had spread to Concord and Salisbury, North Carolina; Richmond, Virginia; Nashville, Tennessee; Rock Hill, South Carolina; Tallahassee, Florida; and Montgomery, Alabama. The summer of 1960 saw thirty-three southern cities with integrated eating facilities; a year later, 126 cities had accepted the new order that began in Greensboro.<sup>40</sup> In 1980, municipal government officials, the original protesters, and others joined in a commemoration of the event.

As Greensboro entered the 1970s, the population reached 144,076, giving it a state rank only to Charlotte. The extensive tax base for the city reflects a diversity of manufacturing enterprises and industrial operations including textiles, electrical and other forms of machinery, tobacco, wearing apparel, and chemicals. In recent years, retail stores have spread to the malls and shopping centers encircling the city, with the older downtown business district becoming largely a center for financial institutions. Exceptions in the downtown area include the renovation of the old Carolina Theater into a performing arts center and the adaptive use of the old Greensboro News-Record Building as a home for visual arts.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>R.D.W. Connor, North Carolina: Rebuilding An Ancient Commonwealth, 1584-1925, Vol. II. (Chicago and New York: The American Historical Society, Inc.), 1929, p. 354.

<sup>2</sup>E.S. Arnet, Greensboro, North Carolina: The County Seat Of Guilford. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina), 1955, p. 148.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 419

<sup>4</sup>Greensboro Chamber of Commerce. Annual Report of the First President. (Greensboro: Reece and Elam), 1889, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup>S.M. Kipp. Urban Growth and Social Change In the South: 1870-1920: Greensboro, North Carolina As A Case Study. (PH.D. Dissertation, Princeton University), 1974, p. 125.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Greensboro Chamber of Commerce. Annual Report of the First President. (Greensboro: Reece and Elam), 1889, p. 6.

<sup>8</sup>Greensboro Patriot, Feb. 8, 1889, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup>S.M. Kipp. Urban Growth and Social Change In the South: 1870-1920: Greensboro, North Carolina As A Case Study. (PH. D. Dissertation, Princeton University), 1974, p. 123.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 126.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Sanborn Insurance Maps of Greensboro, 1888.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 1896.

<sup>15</sup>Greensboro Daily News, Nov. 16, 1940, Section F., p. 12.

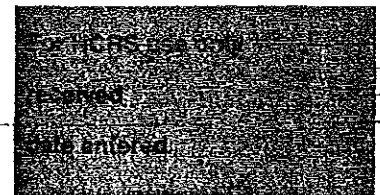
<sup>16</sup>J.F. Baylin, A Historical Study of Residential Development In Greensboro, 1808-1965. (Unpublished Masters Thesis: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), 1965, pp. 37 and 40.

<sup>17</sup>C.M. Ward's Map of Greensboro, 1879; and, Sanborn Insurance Maps of Greensboro, 1885-91



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<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>C.M. Ward's Map of Greensboro, 1879.

<sup>20</sup>Sanborn Insurance Maps of Greensboro, 1888-1891.

<sup>21</sup>Turner Directory Co. Greensboro North Carolina City Directory, 1890. (Newburgh, N.Y.: Turner Directory Co.), 1890.

<sup>22</sup>Sanborn Insurance Maps of Greensboro, 1888.

<sup>23</sup>E.S. Arnet. Greensboro, North Carolina: The County Seat of Guilford. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina), 1955. p. 419.

<sup>24</sup>H.T. Lefler and A.R. Newsome, The History of a Southern State: North Carolina (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 1954, p. 513.

<sup>25</sup>Sanborn Insurance Maps of Greensboro, 1888-1891.

<sup>26</sup>Hill Directory Co., Greensboro, North Carolina City Directory. (Richmond, Va.: Hill Directory Co.), 1900.

<sup>27</sup>E.S. Arnet. Greensboro, North Carolina: The County Seat of Guilford. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina), 1955, p. 419.

<sup>28</sup>W.S. Kline and Co., Greensboro Illustrated, 1904-05, p. 52; and C.E. Weaver, Sketches of Greensboro, (Greensboro: Central Publishing Co.), 1917, p. 15.

<sup>29</sup>C.E. Weaver, Sketches of Greensboro, (Greensboro: Central Publishing Co.), 1917, p. 34.

<sup>30</sup>Guilford County Deeds Book, Book 186, p. 147.

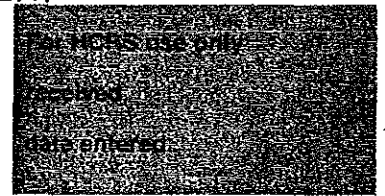
<sup>31</sup>E.S. Arnet. Greensboro, North Carolina: The County Seat of Guilford. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina), 1955, p. 419.

<sup>32</sup>C.E. Weaver, Sketches of Greensboro, (Greensboro: Central Publishing Co.), 1917, p. 34.

<sup>33</sup>Greensboro Daily News, Feb. 11, 1923.

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<sup>34</sup>E.S. Arnet. Greensboro, North Carolina: The County Seat of Guilford. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina), 1955, p. 419.

<sup>35</sup>Greensboro Daily News, Feb. 11, 1923.

<sup>36</sup>H.T. Lefler and A.R. Newsome, The History of a Southern State: North Carolina (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 1954, p. 576.

<sup>37</sup>Ruth Little-Stokes interview with Charles Hartman, October 23, 1975.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>North Carolina Highway Historical Marker File J 79, SIT-INS, Research Branch, Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

<sup>41</sup>"The Community of Greensboro and Guilford County," Greensboro Public Library (Greensboro, 1977), 6-8.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

(see bibliography accompanying enclosed historical sketch)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 58 acres

Quadrangle name Greensboro

Quadrangle scale 1: 24000

UMT References

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3	9	9	2	5	5	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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6	0	8	8	2	0
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6	0	8	6	7	0
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3	9	9	2	1	6	0
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Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet and plat map outlined in red.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ray Manieri Executive Director

organization Old Greensborough Preservation Society date Fall-79/Winter-80

street & number 602-A South Elm Street telephone (919) 272-6617

city or town Greensboro state North Carolina 27406

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*William S. Price*

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date May 6, 1982

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

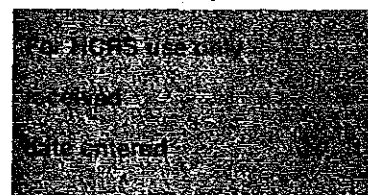
Keeper of the National Register

Agent

Chief of Registration

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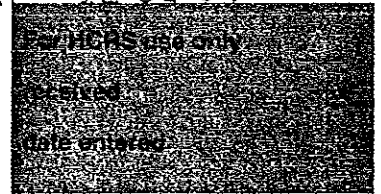
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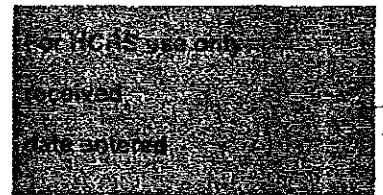
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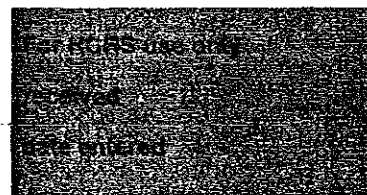
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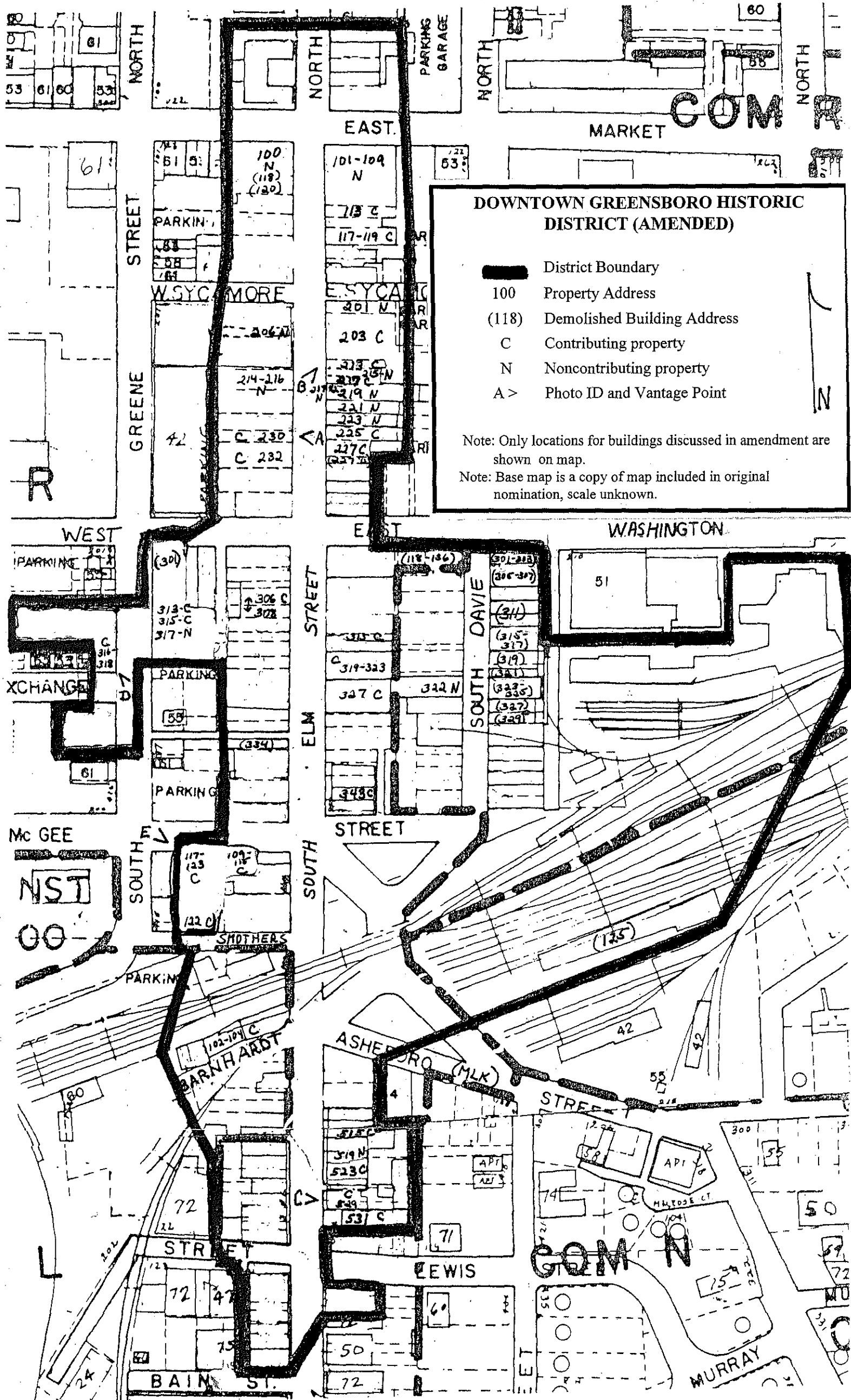
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The Downtown Greensboro Historic District encompasses the general area bounded by Friendly Avenue on the north, North Davie Street and the Southern Railway tracks on the east, Greene Street and Eugene Street on the west, and East Lee Street on the south. This area includes most of Greensboro's downtown business district and is outlined on the attached map.

The boundaries of the district begin in the 100 block of North Elm Street and proceed southward along the street into the 600 block of South Elm Street. Also included in the proposed district are the 300 block of South Davie Street and the Southern Railway Depot #2 on the east and portions of West Washington Street and South Green Street to the west.



**DOWNTOWN GREENSBORO HISTORIC DISTRICT (AMENDED)**

-  District Boundary
- 100 Property Address
- (118) Demolished Building Address
- C Contributing property
- N Noncontributing property
- A > Photo ID and Vantage Point

Note: Only locations for buildings discussed in amendment are shown on map.  
Note: Base map is a copy of map included in original nomination, scale unknown.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 1, 3, 4, 5 Page 1

Downtown Greensboro Historic District (Amended)  
Guilford County, North Carolina

[Note: Only amended items and the required NPS certification are included below.]

1. **NAME OF PROPERTY:** Downtown Greensboro Historic District (Amended)
3. **STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION:** As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant locally.

Jeffrey Crow SHPO 5/26/04  
Signature of certifying official/title Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION:** I hereby certify that the property is entered in the National Register. [\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. **NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:**

Contributing: 96 buildings  
Noncontributing: 15 buildings

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 7

Page 2

Downtown Greensboro Historic District (Amended)  
Guilford County, North Carolina

### 7. DESCRIPTION:

The Downtown Greensboro Historic District was listed in the National Register in June 1982. This amendment presents the case for extending the period of significance from 1930 to 1950.

The original nomination notes that the district encompasses the core of Greensboro's historic downtown commercial area with Elm Street forming the central focus. The district's oldest buildings, erected during the second half of the 1880s, are typically three-story brick structures designed in the Italianate-influenced commercial vernacular of the late nineteenth century. As the century came to a close, commercial buildings with greater architectural richness reflected a period of dramatic growth in the city. Hard-baked red face brick was frequently used, and simple galvanized iron cornices and granite sills and lintels commonly decorated the facades. At the turn of the century, the first buildings with real architectural pretensions were erected, and while basic Italianate elements remained constant, classical and Romanesque details were also introduced. The twentieth century brought contrasting trends in the commercial architecture of downtown Greensboro. The more ordinary speculative commercial structures became simpler in design, but architect-designed buildings became increasingly sophisticated.

In the 1920s, elaborate classicism continued, as exemplified by the Jefferson Standard Building, the Carolina Theatre, and the Southern Railway Passenger Depot #2. At the same time, toward the end of the decade, the modern Art Deco style became popular in downtown Greensboro, with the Kress and Woolworth buildings serving as key monuments in the style.

The Depression brought a significant, but temporary, slow-down in Greensboro's commerce, but recovery was under way by the mid-1930s. As a testament to the resilience of downtown, eight buildings were erected in the district during the decade, mostly after 1935. In addition, four buildings erected prior to 1930 were significantly remodeled during the 1930s. Interestingly, after the modern Art Deco buildings of the late 1920s, several of the buildings erected during the 1930s were strongly classical in design, such as the former Efrid's Department Store at 230 South Elm Street (early 1930s) and the Shiffman Building at 225 South Elm Street (1936). The former Montgomery Ward Building at 232 South Elm Street (1936) combined classical detailing with modern proportions and plain, broad surfaces. The most spectacular building of the 1930s was the Belk Building, erected in 1939 at 101 South Elm Street. This large corner building was an excellent example of the streamlined Moderne style with its curved corner and horizontal bands of pre-cast concrete and glass-block windows. Sadly, its exterior was substantially remodeled in 1984 with an updated version of concrete and glass banding. Of the four buildings that were remodeled in the 1930s, the Isaacson Building at 306-308 South Elm Street

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is the most architecturally distinctive. This two-story, two-storefront building is faced with cast stone and features simple, but strong, Art Deco detailing across the upper facade above the second-floor windows.

Greensboro experienced another economic slump in the early 1940s, but by mid-decade and especially toward the end of the 1940s and extending through 1950, there was a renewed flurry of building activity in the district. Eight buildings were erected and an earlier building was substantially remodeled during these years. While three of those erected are simple, one-story brick (109-115 McGee Street, 1950) or concrete block (102-104 Barnhardt Street, 1947 and 122 Smothers Place, 1948) structures, and one (317 South Greene Street, 1946) is a simple two-story brick building, the remaining four are decidedly modern. The facade of the ca. 1944 Harry D. Kellet Building at 531 South Elm Street is sheathed with black carrera glass panels and has a rounded entranceway with double-leaf doors flanked by vertical strips of glass blocks. The two-story brick building at 316-318 South Greene Street, built in 1948, also makes use, on a smaller scale, of black carrera glass. In this case it surrounds long octagonal windows at the southeast corner of the building. The building's paired central entrances are flanked by curved walls of glass blocks. The spare, rectangular shape of the building and its metal, tilted-sash, second-floor windows also contribute to its modern feel. The Center Theatre, built in 1948 at 117-119 South Elm Street, achieves a Moderne appearance through its facade, which is composed of three pre-cast concrete vertical sections of three heights descending from north to south, each different in design. The decade culminated with the construction of the largest building in the district since the former Belk Building was erected in 1939. The cornerstone of the former Ellis Stone/Thalhimer's Department Store at 203 South Elm Street was laid in 1949, and the building opened in 1950. A good example of mid-twentieth-century modernism, it was designed by the New York architectural firm of Vorhees, Walker, Foley, and Smith. The large, two-story, brick building has clean, rectilinear lines created by the slightly projecting, flat cornice, the horizontal expanse of plain brickwork across the upper floor interrupted only by deeply inset vertical windows rising the entire height of the tall upper floor, and the flat canopy over the street-level glass storefront. Plain marble panels and brass detailing add to the modern refinement of the exterior of the building, while a sweeping circular stair with a brass handrail graces the interior.

After 1950, there was a noticeable decrease in construction in the district. No new buildings are known to have been erected during the 1950s and 1960s, and only four buildings during those decades are known to have been substantially remodeled. Only one building was constructed in the 1970s, but three were significantly remodeled. The 1980s saw the last significant new construction and remodeling in the district, when one large building was erected and four earlier buildings were remodeled.

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Building activity in the Downtown Greensboro Historic District between 1931 and 1950 was scattered throughout the district. Construction since 1950 has been confined to the 100 and 200 blocks of South Elm Street, and buildings that were significantly remodeled after 1950 are limited to the 100 and 200 blocks of South Elm Street and the 300 block of South Davie Street. Buildings demolished since 1980 are located primarily east of South Elm Street.

### Inventory List

The expansion of the period of significance for the Downtown Greensboro Historic District from ca. 1885-1930 to ca. 1885-1950 calls for re-evaluation of the contributing or noncontributing status of buildings in the district. Buildings included in this inventory fall into one of the following categories:

- A. Buildings erected or substantially remodeled between 1931 and 1950 that were:
  1. Listed, inappropriately, as contributing buildings in the original inventory, but which now, with the expanded period of significance, are rightfully contributing
  2. Listed as noncontributing in the original inventory, but which are now contributing
  3. Listed, inappropriately, as contributing in the original inventory and which are now noncontributing
  4. Listed as noncontributing in the original inventory and which remain noncontributing
- B. Buildings erected prior to 1930 whose contributing or noncontributing status has changed since the nomination was prepared
- C. Buildings not recorded as separate structures in the original inventory
- D. Buildings originally included in an addendum to the inventory and on the district map but incompletely documented
- E. Buildings demolished since the original inventory was conducted in 1980
- F. Buildings erected since the original inventory was conducted in 1980
- G. Original inventory entries requiring miscellaneous revisions.

A building's category is identified at the end of the heading for each inventory entry.

The following comments apply to the inventory list as a whole:

- This inventory is intended to be used in conjunction with the original nomination inventory, with only significant changes or additional information noted herein. The absence of accompanying

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text indicates that the description and history in the original entry remain current.

- Buildings in the inventory are listed alphabetically by street and, under each street, numerically by address.
- Each listing includes the building's address, name, approximate dates of construction/remodeling, contributing or noncontributing status, and category (e.g. A.2.) as defined above, along with descriptive information as appropriate.
- Buildings addressed in the updated inventory are keyed by address to the district map.
- In the original inventory, in addition to properties being categorized as "C" for contributing and "N" for noncontributing, some properties were categorized as "P" for pivotal. Following today's National Register terminology, this inventory list will categorize buildings only as contributing or noncontributing.
- The on-site inspection conducted in the winter of 2003 revealed that some street numbers and street names have changed from what they were when the original inventory was conducted in 1980. Where this situation occurs for properties included in the updated inventory, the current address will be given with the previous address noted in parentheses, e.g. 226 (226-228) South Elm Street or 122 Smothers Place (Walker Avenue).

### BARNHARDT STREET

#### 102-104 - Jamison Building - 1947 - Contributing - A.2.

Sanborn maps show that this plain, one-story, concrete-block building, which has had a variety of uses, was erected between 1925 and 1950. According to the present owner, it was built in 1947, the third building on the site, the two earlier buildings having burned. A man named Jamison is believed to have been the original owner.

### SOUTH DAVIE AVENUE

#### 301-303 - Patterson Building - E.

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- 305-307 - American Commission Co. Warehouse - **E**.  
311 - Taylor Building - **E**.  
315-317 - Scott-Sparger Building - **E**.  
319 - Guilford Marble and Tile Co. Building - **E**.  
321 - Davis Building - **E**.  
322 - Former Odell Hardware Company Warehouse #3 - ca. 1917/1980s - Noncontributing - **B**.  
This visually striking building, which originally was defined by a series of round-arched windows, suffered a serious fire in the 1980s, during which the north wall collapsed. When the building subsequently was rehabilitated, the arch theme was retained, but was used as an open curtain wall, behind which the interior walls are recessed. A set-back rooftop floor has also been added.  
323-325 - Newell Building - **E**.  
327 - Petty-Reid Building - **E**.  
329 - M. T. Pickard Building - **E**.

### SOUTH ELM STREET

- 100 - First Citizens Bank - 1983 - Noncontributing - **F**.  
Large, multi-story (4 or 5?), reflective glass and brick building whose main entrance is oriented toward the corner of South Elm and Market Streets. Replaced 118 and 120 South Elm Street.  
101-109 - Belk Building - 1939/1984 - Noncontributing - **A.3**.  
The Belk Building, an excellent example of the streamlined Moderne style with its curved corner and horizontal bands of pre-cast concrete and glass-block windows, was the most architecturally significant of the buildings erected in the district during the 1930s. It was substantially remodeled in 1984 with an updated version of concrete and glass banding.  
113 - Building - ca. 1905/ca. 1950 - Contributing - **G**.  
Sanborn maps show that this building was erected ca. 1905, not in 1939, as stated in the original inventory. Originally it was a five-story building with classical arches. All five floors remained until at least 1939, as shown in a documentary photograph. Later, perhaps due to a fire, the upper three floors were removed. However, the dramatic second-floor arches, which extend to either side in brick bands, remain intact.  
117-119 - Center Theatre - 1948 - Contributing - **A.1**.

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118 - Lerner Building (See 100 South Elm Street.) - **E.**

120 - Former Prago-Guyes Building (See 100 South Elm Street.) - **E.**

201 - Building - ca. 1902/ca. 1985 - Noncontributing - **C.**

The nomination inventory treated this as part of the Ellis Stone/Thalhimer's Building (with an overall address given as 201-207 South Elm Street). However, the three-story building, which originally had a decorative round corner tower, was shown on the 1902 Sanborn map as being under construction at that time. It was still intact when the Ellis Stone Building was completed in 1950, but by 1979 the tower had been removed and the building had been remodeled. Around 1985, the building was again remodeled, and now has a severely plain, stuccoed facade.

203 (201-207) - Ellis Stone/Thalhimer's Building - 1949-1950 - Contributing - **A.2.**

Photographs taken soon after the building was erected show that today the exterior appears nearly identical to its original appearance. The only notable difference is that originally the tall, recessed, upper-floor windows had what appears to have been Roman shades; by 1979 these had been replaced with louvers on the upper halves of the windows; today the louvers have been removed and low, metal balcony railings have been installed flush to the front wall of the building. The Ellis Stone Department Store was the original occupant of the building, but in 1957 it was replaced by Thalhimer's Department Store, which remained in the building until the mid 1970s. The building is now used as the Elm Street Center, a venue for special events. This is the most significant building—in both size and symbol—erected in the district between 1931 and 1950 and was the last substantial building erected prior to the 1980s. The construction of a building of this size in 1949 signaled that commerce in downtown Greensboro was still going strong and that significant investments of this type were still considered justifiable.

206 - Building - ca. 1930/1940s/ca. 1970 - Noncontributing - **C.**

In the original inventory, this one-story building was treated as part of the Meyers Building at 200 South Elm Street. However, it appears to always have been a separate structure. Sanborn maps show that between 1925 and 1950 a three-story building on the site was replaced by a one-story building. A documentary photograph shows that originally it had a decorative facade with patterned brickwork, including "window" panels of herringbone-laid bricks. Photographs made ca. 1950 show that by that time the brick facade had been covered by a Moderne facade, plain in the center but accented by vertical elements on either side. By 1980, the present plain brick facade was in place.

213 - Former California Fruit Store - ca. 1920/1940s - Contributing - **A.2.**

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Although this tiny building is simple, its present appearance, with its large-glass-tile upper facade that was probably installed in the 1940s, is essentially the same as when it was photographed in July 1950.

**214-216 - Mangel-Saslow Building - 1934/ca.1953/ca. 1970 - Noncontributing - A.4.**

When erected, this two-story building had a unified upper facade with a plain wall surface and a band of four horizontal windows which appear to have had either tilt or roll-out sash. Around 1953, the south half was covered with carrara-glass tiles, and apparently not long thereafter, the north half was covered with the same tiles. Probably around 1970, the south half was again covered, this time with vertical-ribbed metal sheathing, so that what was once a unified building now has the appearance of two buildings that developed separately.

**215 - National Hat Shop Building - ca. 1920/1940s/ca. 1970 - Noncontributing - A.4.**

A 1950 photograph shows this building with a stylish Moderne facade that appears to have been composed of black carrara glass and neon banding and lettering. However, probably around 1970, the facade was totally remodeled and the upper portion was covered with vertical wood boards set in a sawtooth-like pattern.

**217 - Building - ca. 1920/1940s - Contributing - A.2.**

The large-glass-tile upper facade of this building suggests that, like 213 South Elm Street, its present appearance dates from the 1940s.

**217 1/2 - Building - ca. 1919/ca. 1970 - Noncontributing - C.**

This narrow, one-story building was treated as part of 217 South Elm Street in the original inventory. By 1919, the Sanborn maps show a harness shop at this location. The present stucco and glass appearance of the building probably dates from a ca. 1970 remodeling.

**219 - Building - ca. 1885/ca. 1949/1950s or 1960s/post 1980 - Noncontributing - A.4.**

Although the original inventory states that this building was built ca. 1885 and was remodeled ca. 1949, it actually has been remodeled several times. In the 1950s or 1960s it received a vertical metal facade, and it now has a stuccoed facade.

**221 - Former Greensboro Hardware Co. Building - ca. 1908/1960s - Noncontributing - B.**

The present metal grid facade appears to date from the 1960s.

**223 (233) South Elm Street - Hendrix Building - ca. 1908/ca. 1980 - Noncontributing - B.**

The original facade of brick and granite has been stuccoed, and the storefront has been remodeled on more than one occasion.

**225 - Shiffman Building - 1936 - Contributing - A.1.**



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227 - Building - ca. 1896 - Contributing - G.

Clarification: The original inventory entry was identified as both contributing and noncontributing. This building, #227, is, in fact, contributing. The noncontributing part must have referred to the small, adjacent, one-story building erected between 1925 and 1950 and now demolished. (Listed as 227 1/2 in the list of demolished buildings.)

227 1/2 - Building (Originally recorded as part of 227 South Elm Street, this small one-story building was erected between 1925 and 1950.) E.

230 - Former Efird's Department Store - early 1930s - Contributing - A. 2.

When recorded in 1980, the facade of this building had been sheathed with mid-twentieth-century ceramic tiles. Since then, the later facade was removed, revealing the largely intact first and second floors of what had originally been a three-story structure. It is not known exactly when the third story was lost, although a 1948 documentary photograph shows it still in place. The third story was a short story with six-over-six sash windows. All the other character-defining features, particularly the tall round-arched windows of the second story, remain intact. The building is distinguished by the use of Flemish-bond brickwork; the three tall, round-arched windows of the second floor with their Adamesque upper sash crowned by three-row brick arches with keystones; two stone roundels above and between the windows; and stone quoining that forms a border at either side of the facade.

232 (232-234) - Former Montgomery Ward Building - 1936 - Contributing - A.1.

306-308 - Isaacson Building - ca. 1900/1930s - Contributing - A.1.

315 (317) - American Cafe Building - ca. 1920 - Contributing - B.

It is unclear why this building was labeled noncontributing in the original inventory. It is, and was then, a well-preserved example of a ca. 1920 commercial building.

319-323 (323) - Rustin Building - 1937 - Contributing - A.2.

334 - Southern Export Building - E.

327 (329) - Former Odell Hardware Co. Showroom Building - ca. 1885 - Contributing-G.

This building was originally listed as a pivotal (contributing) building in the district, even though at the time it had a totally modern facade. Since then, however, the modern facade has been removed and the original facade has been restored, so that now the building actually is a contributing resource in the district. The three-story, eight-bay-wide, brick building has granite trim, round-arched third-floor windows, and a bracketed cornice.

343 - Tanenhaus Building #2 - ca. 1918 - Contributing - C.

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In the original inventory, this building was listed with 341 South Elm Street as a single structure. Their storefronts—nearly identical and characterized by broad segmental arches with shields emblazoned with the letter "T" for Tanenhaus—were in place by ca. 1930. Otherwise, the two buildings are shown in documentary photographs made since around 1930 as having differently designed facades. Sanborn maps show that 343 had been built by 1919, while 341 was built between 1919 and 1925. While 341 has a more Mediterranean feel with a pent tile roof and a decorative brickwork facade, 343 has had, at least since 1930, a plain brick facade with a band of windows above the storefront. The windows are now altered.

515 - Tucker-Erwin Building - ca. 1895/1930s-1940s - Contributing - **A.1.**

519 - Former Commercial Hotel - ca. 1903/ca. 1936/post 1980 - Noncontributing - **B.**

The little detailing that dated from the ca. 1936 remodeling after damage from a tornado has been hidden by stucco added since 1980.

523 (523-525) - Southside Hardware Building - ca. 1902/ca. 1936 - Contributing - **A.1.**

529 South Elm Street - B. W. Jerrell Building - ca. 1936 - Contributing - **A.2.**

531 South Elm Street - Harry D. Kellet Building - ca. 1944 - Contributing - **A.2.**

## **SOUTH GREENE STREET**

301 - Greensboro Coffee Shop - **E.** (Demolished in 1988 to make way for addition to 113 West Washington Street) - **D.**

313 - Robertson Furniture Building - ca. 1920 - Contributing - **D.**

Three-story, painted-brick building with corbeled cornice, rectangular windows across facade with brick panels above each set of windows, segmental-arched windows along second and third floors of long north-side elevation, and added rectangular windows along first floor of north elevation. Served various furniture companies through at least the 1950s.

315 - Hepler Grocery - 1926 - Contributing - **D.**

Two-story brick building with corbeled cornice and paired rectangular windows on second floor. Crutchfield Plumbing occupied building in its first year; in 1927 it occupied only the second floor, while the Ernest C. Hepler Grocery took over the first floor.

316-318 - WCOG Radio Station Building - 1948 - Contributing - **D.**

Two-story, brick, clean-cut building with horizontal octagonal windows at southeast

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corner surrounded by black carrara glass, central entrances flanked by glass blocks, and metal-tilt second-floor windows with a small round window in the center of the facade. City directories reveal that the building was erected in 1948 and was first occupied by WCOG Radio Station (Greensboro's third), the Radio Grill Restaurant, and Southern Photo Print and Supply Company.

**317 - Davidson Supply Company - 1946 - Noncontributing - D.**

Two-story stuccoed-brick building. Although it retains its original modernized fluted pilasters on either side of the facade and triglyph frieze across the top, the building's otherwise utilitarian design was dressed up ca. 1990 with modified windows and numerous post-modern details on both the facade and the south elevation. The original and long-time owner-occupant was the Davidson Auto Supply Company, later simply the Davidson Supply Company.

### **MARTIN LUTHER KING STREET (formerly Ashboro Street)**

**125 - Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Depot - E.**

### **McGEE STREET (formerly West Edwards Place)**

**109-115 - Building - 1950 - Contributing - D.**

Plain one-story brick building with four storefronts, each with a central door with transom flanked by two show windows. Originally used as the Thrift Shop (women's clothing), Columbia Laundry, Stanley Finance Inc., and the SR TV Company (television sales and service).

**117-123 - General Greene Hotel - ca. 1925 - Contributing - D.**

Although this building currently is a three-story brick shell with second and third-floor windows removed and interior gutted (as if in the middle of a rehab that was aborted), the shell and its detailing are intact, based on a photograph made soon after the building was erected. The 1925 Sanborn map shows the building "from plans." The hotel was housed on the second and third floors, while the first floor, in addition to the hotel lobby, housed the Union Bus Station and the Terminal Lunch Restaurant. The hotel entrance appears intact, with a double-leaf door with sidelights and transom, a show window, a wood canopy hung by chains, and a transom. (The other storefronts are boarded up.) Surviving details from the upper two floors include all the window openings, granite and brick

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string courses, a one-bay ironwork balcony in the center of the second floor, two blind balustrade panels beneath the granite-coped cornice, and a pair of lunette upper windows near the front of each side elevation.

### **SMOTHERS PLACE (formerly Walker Avenue)**

122 - Building - 1948 - Contributing - D.

Originally used as the Kirby vacuum cleaner sales and service business, this is a narrow but long one-story concrete block building with an entrance on the west side of the south facade, a show window on the east side of the facade, and a terra cotta tile cornice coping.

### **EAST WASHINGTON STREET**

118-136 - Building - E.

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### 8. SIGNIFICANCE:

#### Summary

The Downtown Greensboro Historic District was listed in the National Register in June 1982. The nomination identified the district's period of significance as ca. 1885-1930, with ca. 1885 being the date of construction of the oldest buildings in the district and 1930 being the last year (based on when the nomination was prepared) in which the district was at least fifty years old. On-site investigation and documentary research conducted by the consultant in the winter of 2003 revealed the appropriateness of extending the district's period of significance. This amendment presents the case for ending the period of significance in 1950, because the decades between 1930 and 1950 demonstrate the continuation of significant commercial development in the district with numerous buildings reflecting that development.

By the mid-1930s, recovery from the Depression was under way, and during the decade eight commercial buildings were erected and four more were substantially remodeled in the district. During the 1940s, eight additional buildings were erected, and one was substantially remodeled, verifying the continued commercial vitality of Greensboro's business district. The decade culminated in the 1949-1950 construction in the heart of the district of the large, modern department store for Ellis Stone and Company. However, in 1949 another, conflicting, event occurred that had a significant impact on the future of downtown as a retail center. In that year, the Summit Shopping Center opened as the first suburban shopping center in Greensboro; it was followed by other neighborhood shopping centers. Consequently, in the decades after 1950, very few buildings were erected or remodeled in the district, rendering 1950 the appropriate end to the period of significance.

In addition to discussing the buildings erected or substantially remodeled between 1931 and 1950, the amendment's inventory list also includes buildings erected prior to 1930 whose contributing or noncontributing status has changed since the original nomination was prepared; buildings not recorded as separate structures in the original inventory; buildings originally included in an addendum to the inventory and on the district map but incompletely documented; buildings demolished since the original inventory was conducted in 1980; buildings erected since 1980; and original inventory entries requiring miscellaneous revisions.

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### Historical Background and Context

Greensboro experienced a period of explosive growth in the 1920s accompanied by the construction of numerous buildings in the city's commercial center, many of which were architect-designed and exhibited the latest in architectural fashion. Although the Depression hindered Greensboro's retail trade during the early 1930s, recovery was well under way by mid-decade. The Downtown Greensboro Historic District strongly reflects this recovery, for during the 1930s, eight commercial buildings were erected—including the mammoth Belk Department Store at the southeast corner of South Elm and Market streets—and four buildings were substantially remodeled.

The 1940s were active years for Greensboro as a whole. Entry of the United States into World War II initially brought an economic slump to the city, but in 1942 Greensboro was selected as the site for an army training camp, the only one in America located entirely within a municipality. During a thirteen-month period, 87,000 men trained at the camp, and for more than a year thereafter, the camp served as the Overseas Replacement Depot for the Army Air Corps in the Eastern United States, processing 240,000 men and women during that period. The camp was a significant boost to Greensboro's economy.

Meanwhile, the city continued as a transportation hub. In 1940, thirty-nine Southern Railway passenger trains and twenty-nine freight trains ran through Greensboro daily. Union Bus Station saw sixty-one buses dispatched each weekday and on Sunday, ninety-two buses arrived or departed.

In 1946 the United States Post Office Department selected Greensboro as a mail hub, serving 5,331 post offices in five states between Washington and Atlanta. In 1947 Greensboro reached a new level of sophistication with the establishment of a planning and zoning commission. During the decade, several radio stations went on the air in Greensboro, one of which, WCOG, broadcast from a studio located at 316-318 South Greene Street beginning in 1948. In 1949, WFMY-TV transmitted a live image and voice to the approximately 2,000 television sets already in the Piedmont. Sales and service became an essential element of this new entertainment industry, and one such business, the SR TV Company, began operating at 115 McGee Street in 1950. During the 1940s, Greensboro's business district, with its large department and furniture stores, clothing stores, and specialty shops, was the retail center of the Piedmont.

Construction in the district during the 1940s included the erection of eight buildings and the substantial

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remodeling of one, verifying the continued commercial vitality of the place. The most significant of these buildings—both in size and symbol—was the large, modern department store built for Ellis Stone and Company in 1949-1950 and later occupied by Thalhimers' Department Store for nearly two decades beginning in 1957. The construction of this building at the end of the 1940s made a strong statement about commerce in downtown Greensboro—that it was still going strong and that its role as a center for shopping was considered to have a bright future, thereby justifying such a large investment.

However, another event took place in 1949 that had a serious impact on downtown's future as a center for shopping. In that year, the Summit Shopping Center opened as the first suburban shopping center in Greensboro and only the second one in North Carolina. It was followed by other neighborhood shopping centers and, later, enclosed malls, and eventually these took their toll on downtown as the center of retail shopping. During the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, very few buildings were erected or remodeled in the district. Within a three year period in the 1970s, three South Elm Street department stores closed—Belk's in 1975, Thalhimers' in 1976, and Meyer's in 1978—no longer able to struggle against the tide of suburban commercial development. The era of downtown as the center for shopping in Greensboro was over.

[The primary source used in this essay for information on the historical development of Greensboro after 1930 was: Gayle Hicks Fripp, *Greensboro: A Chosen Center* (Sun Valley, CA: American Historical Press, 2001), 99-137.]

### 11. FORM PREPARED BY:

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### PHOTOGRAPHS:

The following photographs depict representative properties cited in the inventory as reclassified from noncontributing or no-given-status to contributing as a result of this nomination amendment.

Name of Property: Downtown Greensboro Historic District  
Location: Guilford County, North Carolina  
Photographer: Laura A. W. Phillips  
Date of Photographs: 2003  
Negative Location: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C.

- A. 230 South Elm Street, Former Efird's Department Store, view to west
- B. 203 South Elm Street, Ellis Stone/Thalhimer's Building, view to northeast
- C. 529 South Elm Street, B. W. Jerrell Building, view to east
- D. 316-318 South Greene Street, WCOG Radio Station Building, view to northwest
- E. 117-123 McGee Street, General Greene Hotel, view to southeast



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Downtown Greensboro Historic District (Amended)  
Guilford County, North Carolina

[Note: Only amended items and the required NPS certification are included below.]

1. **NAME OF PROPERTY:** Downtown Greensboro Historic District (Amended)
3. **STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION:** As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant locally.

Jeffrey Crow SHPO 5/26/04  
Signature of certifying official/title Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION:** I hereby certify that the property is entered in the National Register. [ \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. **NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:**

Contributing: 96 buildings  
Noncontributing: 15 buildings

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### 7. DESCRIPTION:

The Downtown Greensboro Historic District was listed in the National Register in June 1982. This amendment presents the case for extending the period of significance from 1930 to 1950.

The original nomination notes that the district encompasses the core of Greensboro's historic downtown commercial area with Elm Street forming the central focus. The district's oldest buildings, erected during the second half of the 1880s, are typically three-story brick structures designed in the Italianate-influenced commercial vernacular of the late nineteenth century. As the century came to a close, commercial buildings with greater architectural richness reflected a period of dramatic growth in the city. Hard-baked red face brick was frequently used, and simple galvanized iron cornices and granite sills and lintels commonly decorated the facades. At the turn of the century, the first buildings with real architectural pretensions were erected, and while basic Italianate elements remained constant, classical and Romanesque details were also introduced. The twentieth century brought contrasting trends in the commercial architecture of downtown Greensboro. The more ordinary speculative commercial structures became simpler in design, but architect-designed buildings became increasingly sophisticated. In the 1920s, elaborate classicism continued, as exemplified by the Jefferson Standard Building, the Carolina Theatre, and the Southern Railway Passenger Depot #2. At the same time, toward the end of the decade, the modern Art Deco style became popular in downtown Greensboro, with the Kress and Woolworth buildings serving as key monuments in the style.

The Depression brought a significant, but temporary, slow-down in Greensboro's commerce, but recovery was under way by the mid-1930s. As a testament to the resilience of downtown, eight buildings were erected in the district during the decade, mostly after 1935. In addition, four buildings erected prior to 1930 were significantly remodeled during the 1930s. Interestingly, after the modern Art Deco buildings of the late 1920s, several of the buildings erected during the 1930s were strongly classical in design, such as the former Efid's Department Store at 230 South Elm Street (early 1930s) and the Shiffman Building at 225 South Elm Street (1936). The former Montgomery Ward Building at 232 South Elm Street (1936) combined classical detailing with modern proportions and plain, broad surfaces. The most spectacular building of the 1930s was the Belk Building, erected in 1939 at 101 South Elm Street. This large corner building was an excellent example of the streamlined Moderne style with its curved corner and horizontal bands of pre-cast concrete and glass-block windows. Sadly, its exterior was substantially remodeled in 1984 with an updated version of concrete and glass banding. Of the four buildings that were remodeled in the 1930s, the Isaacson Building at 306-308 South Elm Street

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is the most architecturally distinctive. This two-story, two-storefront building is faced with cast stone and features simple, but strong, Art Deco detailing across the upper facade above the second-floor windows.

Greensboro experienced another economic slump in the early 1940s, but by mid-decade and especially toward the end of the 1940s and extending through 1950, there was a renewed flurry of building activity in the district. Eight buildings were erected and an earlier building was substantially remodeled during these years. While three of those erected are simple, one-story brick (109-115 McGee Street, 1950) or concrete block (102-104 Barnhardt Street, 1947 and 122 Smothers Place, 1948) structures, and one (317 South Greene Street, 1946) is a simple two-story brick building, the remaining four are decidedly modern. The facade of the ca. 1944 Harry D. Kellet Building at 531 South Elm Street is sheathed with black carrera glass panels and has a rounded entranceway with double-leaf doors flanked by vertical strips of glass blocks. The two-story brick building at 316-318 South Greene Street, built in 1948, also makes use, on a smaller scale, of black carrera glass. In this case it surrounds long octagonal windows at the southeast corner of the building. The building's paired central entrances are flanked by curved walls of glass blocks. The spare, rectangular shape of the building and its metal, tilted-sash, second-floor windows also contribute to its modern feel. The Center Theatre, built in 1948 at 117-119 South Elm Street, achieves a Moderne appearance through its facade, which is composed of three pre-cast concrete vertical sections of three heights descending from north to south, each different in design. The decade culminated with the construction of the largest building in the district since the former Belk Building was erected in 1939. The cornerstone of the former Ellis Stone/Thalhimer's Department Store at 203 South Elm Street was laid in 1949, and the building opened in 1950. A good example of mid-twentieth-century modernism, it was designed by the New York architectural firm of Vorhees, Walker, Foley, and Smith. The large, two-story, brick building has clean, rectilinear lines created by the slightly projecting, flat cornice, the horizontal expanse of plain brickwork across the upper floor interrupted only by deeply inset vertical windows rising the entire height of the tall upper floor, and the flat canopy over the street-level glass storefront. Plain marble panels and brass detailing add to the modern refinement of the exterior of the building, while a sweeping circular stair with a brass handrail graces the interior.

After 1950, there was a noticeable decrease in construction in the district. No new buildings are known to have been erected during the 1950s and 1960s, and only four buildings during those decades are known to have been substantially remodeled. Only one building was constructed in the 1970s, but three were significantly remodeled. The 1980s saw the last significant new construction and remodeling in the district, when one large building was erected and four earlier buildings were remodeled.

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Building activity in the Downtown Greensboro Historic District between 1931 and 1950 was scattered throughout the district. Construction since 1950 has been confined to the 100 and 200 blocks of South Elm Street, and buildings that were significantly remodeled after 1950 are limited to the 100 and 200 blocks of South Elm Street and the 300 block of South Davie Street. Buildings demolished since 1980 are located primarily east of South Elm Street.

### Inventory List

The expansion of the period of significance for the Downtown Greensboro Historic District from ca. 1885-1930 to ca. 1885-1950 calls for re-evaluation of the contributing or noncontributing status of buildings in the district. Buildings included in this inventory fall into one of the following categories:

- A. Buildings erected or substantially remodeled between 1931 and 1950 that were:
  1. Listed, inappropriately, as contributing buildings in the original inventory, but which now, with the expanded period of significance, are rightfully contributing
  2. Listed as noncontributing in the original inventory, but which are now contributing
  3. Listed, inappropriately, as contributing in the original inventory and which are now noncontributing
  4. Listed as noncontributing in the original inventory and which remain noncontributing
- B. Buildings erected prior to 1930 whose contributing or noncontributing status has changed since the nomination was prepared
- C. Buildings not recorded as separate structures in the original inventory
- D. Buildings originally included in an addendum to the inventory and on the district map but incompletely documented
- E. Buildings demolished since the original inventory was conducted in 1980
- F. Buildings erected since the original inventory was conducted in 1980
- G. Original inventory entries requiring miscellaneous revisions.

A building's category is identified at the end of the heading for each inventory entry.

The following comments apply to the inventory list as a whole:

- This inventory is intended to be used in conjunction with the original nomination inventory, with only significant changes or additional information noted herein. The absence of accompanying

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text indicates that the description and history in the original entry remain current.

- Buildings in the inventory are listed alphabetically by street and, under each street, numerically by address.
- Each listing includes the building's address, name, approximate dates of construction/remodeling, contributing or noncontributing status, and category (e.g. **A.2.**) as defined above, along with descriptive information as appropriate.
- Buildings addressed in the updated inventory are keyed by address to the district map.
- In the original inventory, in addition to properties being categorized as "C" for contributing and "N" for noncontributing, some properties were categorized as "P" for pivotal. Following today's National Register terminology, this inventory list will categorize buildings only as contributing or noncontributing.
- The on-site inspection conducted in the winter of 2003 revealed that some street numbers and street names have changed from what they were when the original inventory was conducted in 1980. Where this situation occurs for properties included in the updated inventory, the current address will be given with the previous address noted in parentheses, e.g. 226 (226-228) South Elm Street or 122 Smothers Place (Walker Avenue).

### **BARNHARDT STREET**

102-104 - Jamison Building - 1947 - Contributing - **A.2.**

Sanborn maps show that this plain, one-story, concrete-block building, which has had a variety of uses, was erected between 1925 and 1950. According to the present owner, it was built in 1947, the third building on the site, the two earlier buildings having burned. A man named Jamison is believed to have been the original owner.

### **SOUTH DAVIE AVENUE**

301-303 - Patterson Building - **E.**

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- 305-307 - American Commission Co. Warehouse - **E**.  
311 - Taylor Building - **E**.  
315-317 - Scott-Spiger Building - **E**.  
319 - Guilford Marble and Tile Co. Building - **E**.  
321 - Davis Building - **E**.  
322 - Former Odell Hardware Company Warehouse #3 - ca. 1917/1980s - Noncontributing - **B**.  
This visually striking building, which originally was defined by a series of round-arched windows, suffered a serious fire in the 1980s, during which the north wall collapsed. When the building subsequently was rehabilitated, the arch theme was retained, but was used as an open curtain wall, behind which the interior walls are recessed. A set-back rooftop floor has also been added.  
323-325 - Newell Building - **E**.  
327 - Petty-Reid Building - **E**.  
329 - M. T. Pickard Building - **E**.

### **SOUTH ELM STREET**

- 100 - First Citizens Bank - 1983 - Noncontributing - **F**.  
Large, multi-story (4 or 5?), reflective glass and brick building whose main entrance is oriented toward the corner of South Elm and Market Streets. Replaced 118 and 120 South Elm Street.  
101-109 - Belk Building - 1939/1984 - Noncontributing - **A.3**.  
The Belk Building, an excellent example of the streamlined Moderne style with its curved corner and horizontal bands of pre-cast concrete and glass-block windows, was the most architecturally significant of the buildings erected in the district during the 1930s. It was substantially remodeled in 1984 with an updated version of concrete and glass banding.  
113 - Building - ca. 1905/ca. 1950 - Contributing - **G**.  
Sanborn maps show that this building was erected ca. 1905, not in 1939, as stated in the original inventory. Originally it was a five-story building with classical arches. All five floors remained until at least 1939, as shown in a documentary photograph. Later, perhaps due to a fire, the upper three floors were removed. However, the dramatic second-floor arches, which extend to either side in brick bands, remain intact.  
117-119 - Center Theatre - 1948 - Contributing - **A.1**.

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118 - Lerner Building (See 100 South Elm Street.) - **E.**

120 - Former Prago-Guyes Building (See 100 South Elm Street.) - **E.**

201 - Building - ca. 1902/ca. 1985 - Noncontributing - **C.**

The nomination inventory treated this as part of the Ellis Stone/Thalhimer's Building (with an overall address given as 201-207 South Elm Street). However, the three-story building, which originally had a decorative round corner tower, was shown on the 1902 Sanborn map as being under construction at that time. It was still intact when the Ellis Stone Building was completed in 1950, but by 1979 the tower had been removed and the building had been remodeled. Around 1985, the building was again remodeled, and now has a severely plain, stuccoed facade.

203 (201-207) - Ellis Stone/Thalhimer's Building - 1949-1950 - Contributing - **A.2.**

Photographs taken soon after the building was erected show that today the exterior appears nearly identical to its original appearance. The only notable difference is that originally the tall, recessed, upper-floor windows had what appears to have been Roman shades; by 1979 these had been replaced with louvers on the upper halves of the windows; today the louvers have been removed and low, metal balcony railings have been installed flush to the front wall of the building. The Ellis Stone Department Store was the original occupant of the building, but in 1957 it was replaced by Thalhimer's Department Store, which remained in the building until the mid 1970s. The building is now used as the Elm Street Center, a venue for special events. This is the most significant building—in both size and symbol—erected in the district between 1931 and 1950 and was the last substantial building erected prior to the 1980s. The construction of a building of this size in 1949 signaled that commerce in downtown Greensboro was still going strong and that significant investments of this type were still considered justifiable.

206 - Building - ca. 1930/1940s/ca. 1970 - Noncontributing - **C.**

In the original inventory, this one-story building was treated as part of the Meyers Building at 200 South Elm Street. However, it appears to always have been a separate structure. Sanborn maps show that between 1925 and 1950 a three-story building on the site was replaced by a one-story building. A documentary photograph shows that originally it had a decorative facade with patterned brickwork, including "window" panels of herringbone-laid bricks. Photographs made ca. 1950 show that by that time the brick facade had been covered by a Moderne facade, plain in the center but accented by vertical elements on either side. By 1980, the present plain brick facade was in place.

213 - Former California Fruit Store - ca. 1920/1940s - Contributing - **A.2.**

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Although this tiny building is simple, its present appearance, with its large-glass-tile upper facade that was probably installed in the 1940s, is essentially the same as when it was photographed in July 1950.

**214-216 - Mangel-Saslow Building - 1934/ca.1953/ca. 1970 - Noncontributing - A.4.**

When erected, this two-story building had a unified upper facade with a plain wall surface and a band of four horizontal windows which appear to have had either tilt or roll-out sash. Around 1953, the south half was covered with carrara-glass tiles, and apparently not long thereafter, the north half was covered with the same tiles. Probably around 1970, the south half was again covered, this time with vertical-ribbed metal sheathing, so that what was once a unified building now has the appearance of two buildings that developed separately.

**215 - National Hat Shop Building - ca. 1920/1940s/ca. 1970 - Noncontributing - A.4.**

A 1950 photograph shows this building with a stylish Moderne facade that appears to have been composed of black carrara glass and neon banding and lettering. However, probably around 1970, the facade was totally remodeled and the upper portion was covered with vertical wood boards set in a sawtooth-like pattern.

**217 - Building - ca. 1920/1940s - Contributing - A.2.**

The large-glass-tile upper facade of this building suggests that, like 213 South Elm Street, its present appearance dates from the 1940s.

**217 1/2 - Building - ca. 1919/ca. 1970 - Noncontributing - C.**

This narrow, one-story building was treated as part of 217 South Elm Street in the original inventory. By 1919, the Sanborn maps show a harness shop at this location. The present stucco and glass appearance of the building probably dates from a ca. 1970 remodeling.

**219 - Building - ca. 1885/ca. 1949/1950s or 1960s/post 1980 - Noncontributing - A.4.**

Although the original inventory states that this building was built ca. 1885 and was remodeled ca. 1949, it actually has been remodeled several times. In the 1950s or 1960s it received a vertical metal facade, and it now has a stuccoed facade.

**221 - Former Greensboro Hardware Co. Building - ca. 1908/1960s - Noncontributing - B.**

The present metal grid facade appears to date from the 1960s.

**223 (233) South Elm Street - Hendrix Building - ca. 1908/ca. 1980 - Noncontributing - B.**

The original facade of brick and granite has been stuccoed, and the storefront has been remodeled on more than one occasion.

**225 - Shiffman Building - 1936 - Contributing - A.1.**



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227 - Building - ca. 1896 - Contributing - **G.**

Clarification: The original inventory entry was identified as both contributing and noncontributing. This building, #227, is, in fact, contributing. The noncontributing part must have referred to the small, adjacent, one-story building erected between 1925 and 1950 and now demolished. (Listed as 227 1/2 in the list of demolished buildings.)

227 1/2 - Building (Originally recorded as part of 227 South Elm Street, this small one-story building was erected between 1925 and 1950.) **E.**

230 - Former Efird's Department Store - early 1930s - Contributing - **A. 2.**

When recorded in 1980, the facade of this building had been sheathed with mid-twentieth-century ceramic tiles. Since then, the later facade was removed, revealing the largely intact first and second floors of what had originally been a three-story structure. It is not known exactly when the third story was lost, although a 1948 documentary photograph shows it still in place. The third story was a short story with six-over-six sash windows. All the other character-defining features, particularly the tall round-arched windows of the second story, remain intact. The building is distinguished by the use of Flemish-bond brickwork; the three tall, round-arched windows of the second floor with their Adamesque upper sash crowned by three-row brick arches with keystones; two stone roundels above and between the windows; and stone quoining that forms a border at either side of the facade.

232 (232-234) - Former Montgomery Ward Building - 1936 - Contributing - **A.1.**

306-308 - Isaacson Building - ca. 1900/1930s - Contributing - **A.1.**

315 (317) - American Cafe Building - ca. 1920 - Contributing - **B.**

It is unclear why this building was labeled noncontributing in the original inventory. It is, and was then, a well-preserved example of a ca. 1920 commercial building.

319-323 (323) - Rustin Building - 1937 - Contributing - **A.2.**

334 - Southern Export Building - **E.**

327 (329) - Former Odell Hardware Co. Showroom Building - ca. 1885 - Contributing - **G.**

This building was originally listed as a pivotal (contributing) building in the district, even though at the time it had a totally modern facade. Since then, however, the modern facade has been removed and the original facade has been restored, so that now the building actually is a contributing resource in the district. The three-story, eight-bay-wide, brick building has granite trim, round-arched third-floor windows, and a bracketed cornice.

343 - Tanenhaus Building #2 - ca. 1918 - Contributing - **C.**

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In the original inventory, this building was listed with 341 South Elm Street as a single structure. Their storefronts—nearly identical and characterized by broad segmental arches with shields emblazoned with the letter "T" for Tanenhaus—were in place by ca. 1930. Otherwise, the two buildings are shown in documentary photographs made since around 1930 as having differently designed facades. Sanborn maps show that 343 had been built by 1919, while 341 was built between 1919 and 1925. While 341 has a more Mediterranean feel with a pent tile roof and a decorative brickwork facade, 343 has had, at least since 1930, a plain brick facade with a band of windows above the storefront. The windows are now altered.

515 - Tucker-Erwin Building - ca. 1895/1930s-1940s - Contributing - **A.1.**

519 - Former Commercial Hotel - ca. 1903/ca. 1936/post 1980 - Noncontributing - **B.**

The little detailing that dated from the ca. 1936 remodeling after damage from a tornado has been hidden by stucco added since 1980.

523 (523-525) - Southside Hardware Building - ca. 1902/ca. 1936 - Contributing - **A.1.**

529 South Elm Street - B. W. Jerrell Building - ca. 1936 - Contributing - **A.2.**

531 South Elm Street - Harry D. Kellet Building - ca. 1944 - Contributing - **A.2.**

### SOUTH GREENE STREET

301 - Greensboro Coffee Shop - **E.** (Demolished in 1988 to make way for addition to 113 West Washington Street) - **D.**

313 - Robertson Furniture Building - ca. 1920 - Contributing - **D.**

Three-story, painted-brick building with corbeled cornice, rectangular windows across facade with brick panels above each set of windows, segmental-arched windows along second and third floors of long north-side elevation, and added rectangular windows along first floor of north elevation. Served various furniture companies through at least the 1950s.

315 - Hepler Grocery - 1926 - Contributing - **D.**

Two-story brick building with corbeled cornice and paired rectangular windows on second floor. Crutchfield Plumbing occupied building in its first year; in 1927 it occupied only the second floor, while the Ernest C. Hepler Grocery took over the first floor.

316-318 - WCOG Radio Station Building - 1948 - Contributing - **D.**

Two-story, brick, clean-cut building with horizontal octagonal windows at southeast

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corner surrounded by black carrara glass, central entrances flanked by glass blocks, and metal-tilt second-floor windows with a small round window in the center of the facade. City directories reveal that the building was erected in 1948 and was first occupied by WCOG Radio Station (Greensboro's third), the Radio Grill Restaurant, and Southern Photo Print and Supply Company.

**317 - Davidson Supply Company - 1946 - Noncontributing - D.**

Two-story stuccoed-brick building. Although it retains its original modernized fluted pilasters on either side of the facade and triglyph frieze across the top, the building's otherwise utilitarian design was dressed up ca. 1990 with modified windows and numerous post-modern details on both the facade and the south elevation. The original and long-time owner-occupant was the Davidson Auto Supply Company, later simply the Davidson Supply Company.

### **MARTIN LUTHER KING STREET (formerly Ashboro Street)**

125 - Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Depot - E.

### **McGEE STREET (formerly West Edwards Place)**

**109-115 - Building - 1950 - Contributing - D.**

Plain one-story brick building with four storefronts, each with a central door with transom flanked by two show windows. Originally used as the Thrift Shop (women's clothing), Columbia Laundry, Stanley Finance Inc., and the SR TV Company (television sales and service).

**117-123 - General Greene Hotel - ca. 1925 - Contributing - D.**

Although this building currently is a three-story brick shell with second and third-floor windows removed and interior gutted (as if in the middle of a rehab that was aborted), the shell and its detailing are intact, based on a photograph made soon after the building was erected. The 1925 Sanborn map shows the building "from plans." The hotel was housed on the second and third floors, while the first floor, in addition to the hotel lobby, housed the Union Bus Station and the Terminal Lunch Restaurant. The hotel entrance appears intact, with a double-leaf door with sidelights and transom, a show window, a wood canopy hung by chains, and a transom. (The other storefronts are boarded up.) Surviving details from the upper two floors include all the window openings, granite and brick

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string courses, a one-bay ironwork balcony in the center of the second floor, two blind balustrade panels beneath the granite-coped cornice, and a pair of lunette upper windows near the front of each side elevation.

### **SMOTHERS PLACE (formerly Walker Avenue)**

122 - Building - 1948 - Contributing - **D.**

Originally used as the Kirby vacuum cleaner sales and service business, this is a narrow but long one-story concrete block building with an entrance on the west side of the south facade, a show window on the east side of the facade, and a terra cotta tile cornice coping.

### **EAST WASHINGTON STREET**

118-136 - Building - **E.**

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### 8. SIGNIFICANCE:

#### Summary

The Downtown Greensboro Historic District was listed in the National Register in June 1982. The nomination identified the district's period of significance as ca. 1885-1930, with ca. 1885 being the date of construction of the oldest buildings in the district and 1930 being the last year (based on when the nomination was prepared) in which the district was at least fifty years old. On-site investigation and documentary research conducted by the consultant in the winter of 2003 revealed the appropriateness of extending the district's period of significance. This amendment presents the case for ending the period of significance in 1950, because the decades between 1930 and 1950 demonstrate the continuation of significant commercial development in the district with numerous buildings reflecting that development.

By the mid-1930s, recovery from the Depression was under way, and during the decade eight commercial buildings were erected and four more were substantially remodeled in the district. During the 1940s, eight additional buildings were erected, and one was substantially remodeled, verifying the continued commercial vitality of Greensboro's business district. The decade culminated in the 1949-1950 construction in the heart of the district of the large, modern department store for Ellis Stone and Company. However, in 1949 another, conflicting, event occurred that had a significant impact on the future of downtown as a retail center. In that year, the Summit Shopping Center opened as the first suburban shopping center in Greensboro; it was followed by other neighborhood shopping centers. Consequently, in the decades after 1950, very few buildings were erected or remodeled in the district, rendering 1950 the appropriate end to the period of significance.

In addition to discussing the buildings erected or substantially remodeled between 1931 and 1950, the amendment's inventory list also includes buildings erected prior to 1930 whose contributing or noncontributing status has changed since the original nomination was prepared; buildings not recorded as separate structures in the original inventory; buildings originally included in an addendum to the inventory and on the district map but incompletely documented; buildings demolished since the original inventory was conducted in 1980; buildings erected since 1980; and original inventory entries requiring miscellaneous revisions.

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### Historical Background and Context

Greensboro experienced a period of explosive growth in the 1920s accompanied by the construction of numerous buildings in the city's commercial center, many of which were architect-designed and exhibited the latest in architectural fashion. Although the Depression hindered Greensboro's retail trade during the early 1930s, recovery was well under way by mid-decade. The Downtown Greensboro Historic District strongly reflects this recovery, for during the 1930s, eight commercial buildings were erected—including the mammoth Belk Department Store at the southeast corner of South Elm and Market streets—and four buildings were substantially remodeled.

The 1940s were active years for Greensboro as a whole. Entry of the United States into World War II initially brought an economic slump to the city, but in 1942 Greensboro was selected as the site for an army training camp, the only one in America located entirely within a municipality. During a thirteen-month period, 87,000 men trained at the camp, and for more than a year thereafter, the camp served as the Overseas Replacement Depot for the Army Air Corps in the Eastern United States, processing 240,000 men and women during that period. The camp was a significant boost to Greensboro's economy.

Meanwhile, the city continued as a transportation hub. In 1940, thirty-nine Southern Railway passenger trains and twenty-nine freight trains ran through Greensboro daily. Union Bus Station saw sixty-one buses dispatched each weekday and on Sunday, ninety-two buses arrived or departed.

In 1946 the United States Post Office Department selected Greensboro as a mail hub, serving 5,331 post offices in five states between Washington and Atlanta. In 1947 Greensboro reached a new level of sophistication with the establishment of a planning and zoning commission. During the decade, several radio stations went on the air in Greensboro, one of which, WCOG, broadcast from a studio located at 316-318 South Greene Street beginning in 1948. In 1949, WFMY-TV transmitted a live image and voice to the approximately 2,000 television sets already in the Piedmont. Sales and service became an essential element of this new entertainment industry, and one such business, the SR TV Company, began operating at 115 McGee Street in 1950. During the 1940s, Greensboro's business district, with its large department and furniture stores, clothing stores, and specialty shops, was the retail center of the Piedmont.

Construction in the district during the 1940s included the erection of eight buildings and the substantial

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Downtown Greensboro Historic District (Amended)  
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remodeling of one, verifying the continued commercial vitality of the place. The most significant of these buildings—both in size and symbol—was the large, modern department store built for Ellis Stone and Company in 1949-1950 and later occupied by Thalhimer's Department Store for nearly two decades beginning in 1957. The construction of this building at the end of the 1940s made a strong statement about commerce in downtown Greensboro—that it was still going strong and that its role as a center for shopping was considered to have a bright future, thereby justifying such a large investment.

However, another event took place in 1949 that had a serious impact on downtown's future as a center for shopping. In that year, the Summit Shopping Center opened as the first suburban shopping center in Greensboro and only the second one in North Carolina. It was followed by other neighborhood shopping centers and, later, enclosed malls, and eventually these took their toll on downtown as the center of retail shopping. During the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, very few buildings were erected or remodeled in the district. Within a three year period in the 1970s, three South Elm Street department stores closed—Belk's in 1975, Thalhimer's in 1976, and Meyer's in 1978—no longer able to struggle against the tide of suburban commercial development. The era of downtown as the center for shopping in Greensboro was over.

[The primary source used in this essay for information on the historical development of Greensboro after 1930 was: Gayle Hicks Fripp, *Greensboro: A Chosen Center* (Sun Valley, CA: American Historical Press, 2001), 99-137.]

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### PHOTOGRAPHS:

The following photographs depict representative properties cited in the inventory as reclassified from noncontributing or no-given-status to contributing as a result of this nomination amendment.

Name of Property: Downtown Greensboro Historic District  
Location: Guilford County, North Carolina  
Photographer: Laura A. W. Phillips  
Date of Photographs: 2003  
Negative Location: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C.

- A. 230 South Elm Street, Former Efird's Department Store, view to west
- B. 203 South Elm Street, Ellis Stone/Thalhimer's Building, view to northeast
- C. 529 South Elm Street, B. W. Jerrell Building, view to east
- D. 316-318 South Greene Street, WCOG Radio Station Building, view to northwest
- E. 117-123 McGee Street, General Greene Hotel, view to southeast



